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THE NATURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SACRAMENTS

ARTHUR J. TAIT

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

ENGLISH CHURCH MANUALS.
THE CHURCH AND THE BIBLE.

Fcap. 8vo. Sewed.

Price One Penny.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
London, New York, Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras.

THE NATURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SACRAMENTS

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EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
FOURTH AVENUE & 30TH STREET, NEW YORK
BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS

1917

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TO THE MEMBERS

OF MY DOCTRINE CLASS

AT RIDLEY HALL

PREFACE

THE subject of which this book treats is one which vitally affects our religion; and any contribution to thought about it is worth attempting at a time when that religion is, from one point of view, being put to severe testing, and, from another point of view, confronted with unparalleled opportunity.

Among many of the clergy with whose general conception of religion I find myself most in sympathy, there appears to be an unhappy absence of teaching about the Sacraments, which may be due in part to the lack of clear perception as to their exact nature and functions, and in part to a fear of assisting what they regard as the disproportionate emphasis which is assigned to them in some quarters. Through indifference to the necessity of definite instruction we Evangelicals have failed to encourage the intelligent use of the Sacraments, and must admit our share of responsibility for the prevalent aloofness from sacramental religion.

On the other hand, I am persuaded that some features of the teaching of our High Church brethren, in respect of the Sacraments, need challenging in the interest of truth: and that a measure of the responsibility attaches also to them on account

of the wrong, as I think, importation of the mystery element.

The Sacraments are so precious a part of the Church's inheritance, that it is not easy for anyone to express the conviction that their function in respect of the work of grace is in some quarters being disproportionately magnified, without laying himself open to the charge of depreciating them. But, if the conviction is present, the risk must be accepted.

The fact that the number of communicants is relatively so small cannot, I believe, be wholly or even mainly accounted for in these ways ; for considerable allowance has to be made for the aloofness from organised religion which finds its reason or excuse in the inconsistencies of professing Christians, and for the indifference which is caused by the materialistic tendencies of the age.

At the same time it has to be admitted that the proportion of communicants among the attendants at worship is deplorably small : and I believe that we are only throwing dust in our own eyes, if we explain this fact as due to religious indifference. I venture to suggest that it is in no small degree due to ignorance and misconception.

There are some people who think that participation in the Lord's Supper imposes obligations in the matter of life and conduct from which they can otherwise be free. They must be told that the Lord's Supper is intended to help them to live the life of a disciple of Christ, and from that obligation no Christian man is free.

There are other people who know as a matter of experience that God's grace operates in various ways and by varied means, such as the reading of the Bible, prayer and Christian fellowship, and they see no reason why they should come to the Lord's Supper. It must be shown to them that they have left out of their calculation the honour of the Lord, because they are refusing to commemorate His self-sacrifice for us men in the particular way which He appointed. They must be told, moreover, that they are acting unworthily both towards their Divine Sovereign who invites them to His Holy Feast, and towards themselves as His invited guests. They must also be told that they are depriving themselves of a unique means of help ; for there is no other way, of Divine appointment, in which the Lord's sacrifice for them is symbolically set before their eyes, and the benefits of the sacrifice are so given as to enable the body to come to the assistance of the mind and the spirit for the assurance of possession.

There are yet other people who have an instinctive shrinking from anything that savours of magic, and wish to have nothing to do with an alleged supernatural transaction which can be announced by the ringing of a bell. These people need to be shown that the purpose of the Sacraments is not to add to the mysteries of our religion, but to make the task of faith easier by the provision of outward and visible counterparts of the spiritual realities which faith has to grasp.

But I must forbear : enough has been written

to indicate the purpose of the book, and to make it clear that the challenging of certain lines of thought is not to be interpreted as indifference to the true glory and value of the Sacraments.

The first draft of the manuscript was written without reference to the many sources from which I have consciously or unconsciously derived help since I began to think seriously about the subject. But some time back I had made a special study of the writings of Bishop Jewel, without particular thought as to the use to which I might put it: and it occurred to me, while revising these chapters for the Press, that I might utilise that previous work to good purpose by incorporating the notes which I had made, in so far as they bore upon the subject. This accounts for the special reference to the writings of that great thinker and scholar, who was one of the foremost exponents of the doctrine of the Reformed English Church.

References to the works of other writers have also been introduced, but they are few and incidental. I take this opportunity, therefore, of expressing my indebtedness to the teaching of Waterland, Goode, J. B. Mozley, Dimock, Westcott, Bishop Moule, and Canon J. G. Simpson.

Of these I desire to make special mention of the late Mr. Dimock. His works, for the most part now published in a new and cheap edition, are monuments of Patristic and Reformation research.

If this little book were to achieve nothing else than the introduction of new readers to his

researches, it would not have been written in vain. I hope, however, that it may also have a share of its own in giving to some an articulate expression of the position with which they are in sympathy, and to others a clearer understanding of the position from which they differ.

ARTHUR J. TAIT.

Ridley Lodge,
Cambridge.
The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, 1917.

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THE NATURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SACRAMENTS

CHAPTER I

THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE IN NATURE

IT has become a commonplace of modern theological expression to speak of the Sacraments of the Gospel as a particular application of a general principle which is not confined to religion, but is operative also in other spheres of life and experience. Wherever that which is physical is the instrument whereby there is effected any kind of communication of that which is mental or spiritual, there we are now prepared to find illustration of the working of the Sacramental Principle. It matters not whether the process takes the form of the expression of mind, or of the revelation of will, or of the imparting of moral energy, or of the communication of spiritual power: that which counts is the fact that in some way and for some purpose that which is physical and material is the instrument of that which is mental and spiritual.

It should be noticed, however, that this definition involves an important limitation of the sphere

in which the principle operates. If the subject be mind or spirit, it is manifest that we are considering only personal operations, and not the communication through physical means of impersonal forces. The communication of electricity through a wire is not an illustration of the Sacramental Principle, for the force is impersonal and the object acted upon may be impersonal too. Similarly we must rule out the communication of curative virtue through medicine, because the virtue is impersonal. The electric apparatus may well be regarded as a sacrament of the electrician's wisdom and skill, but the wire is not a sacrament of the electricity. The medicine may be a sacrament of the physician's wisdom and skill, but the fluid is not a sacrament of the healing quality. The reason of this limitation is that the Sacraments are signs and means of grace; and grace is not an impersonal force, or a kind of detached commodity which has an existence of its own apart from personality. Grace, in the sense in which we are now using the word, is the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the minds and hearts of men: it is essentially a personal influence. We cannot therefore recognise any operation of the Sacramental Principle in processes which do not involve personal relationship, but are merely the communication of invisible and impersonal forces through visible means.

With this important limitation, the Sacramental Principle can be defined in the widest possible terms, as the dependence of mind upon matter for the most part of its contacts, whether of ap-

prehension and reception or of communication and expression. But, if this broad definition is accepted, it is obvious that the general principle cannot be appealed to as determining the purpose and mode of operation in any particular application of it: these can only be apprehended through the evidence that pertains to the particular case. The recognition of this point is necessary for the avoidance of false analogies; and it is specially important when we make any attempt to relate the Sacraments of the Gospel to what is generally spoken of as the Sacramental Principle.[1]

On the other hand, the possibility of false analogy does not rule out the examination of the principle in its general working as a right approach to the study of its particular operation in the Christian Sacraments. Such approach seems rather

[1] As illustrations of this point we may notice the kiss as the sacrament of love, the sealed title deed as the sacrament of giving and receiving, and the placing of the ring on the finger as the sacrament of the marriage contract. The common underlying principle is the use of that which is physical and material for the purposes of mind, will, or heart: but the nature, purpose, effects of the use differ. The Incarnation is the supreme example of the operation of the Sacramental Principle; but it is so, not because of the unique conjunction of the Divine and the human, but because that conjunction involved the use of that which is physical for the purpose of revealing the Divine Nature. If the Sacraments of the Gospel be regarded as extensions of the Incarnation, in the sense of participating in that unique conjunction, the conception must rest, not on an appeal to the Sacramental Principle, but on the particular evidence which pertains to the Sacraments. The appeal to the Sacramental Principle carries us no further than to the conception that the Sacraments are instruments whereby relation between God and man is effected or maintained.

to be the only true one, seeing that human nature is the same everywhere, and that there is but one true God, *the First and the Last*, behind, in, and above Creation, Providence, and Redemption alike.

The conception of Nature as a sacrament of God is not a new thought. It can be traced back to the inspired story of Creation, with its simple, but eternally true, presentation of God as the Creator, manifesting, through the things that He made, His power, sovereignty, goodness, wisdom, and love. It matters not who the author or authors were of those opening chapters of Genesis: the language certainly breathes the spirit of the Psalmist's words:

The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament sheweth His handywork.[1]

The sacramental aspect of Nature is presented in the primitive record most clearly in the account of the creation of man, who alone of all created beings was made in God's image, after His likeness.[2]

[1] Ps. xix. 1.

[2] While allowing fully for the impossibility of accepting the words as a description of the physical part of man's being, nevertheless, inasmuch as it is only through the body and its organs that man's moral and spiritual nature can manifest itself, we see in this description the sacramental aspect of Creation in its most developed form. But it should be noticed that, in accordance with the broad definition of the Sacramental Principle, Creation, whether viewed as a whole or in its varied and manifold parts, is a sacrament of God. Man's participation in the Divine likeness affects not the fact, but the nature and content of the sacramental aspect of his being. He is a sacrament of a fuller manifestation of God than that which is afforded by the rest of creation.

Man therefore, by virtue of his participation in the Divine image, is in some sense a sign of God, and is able to reflect the glory of God in a manner and degree which are not possible for the rest of creation. Thus man is the natural sacrament *par excellence*, because on the one hand he bears the Divine image, and on the other hand he is in essence distinct from, and not identical with God.

Of the Old Testament expressions of the sacramental conception of Nature, perhaps the most illuminating, though not the most familiar, is to be found in the later chapters of the Book of Isaiah. The prophet is concerned with the quickening and confirming of the slender faith of the exiled nation —he seeks to arouse their drooping spirit ; and for this purpose he sets before them the wonders of Creation and Providence as sacraments of God.[1] It is not an argument for natural religion, based on the phenomena of Nature, as it would have been, had the prophet been addressing men who possessed no other revelation of God ; but it is a setting forth of the testimony of Creation and History before men who already through direct revelation knew God, for the purpose of reviving their faith in Him. Such meditation on God as revealed in Nature and Providence was calculated to open up new channels for the working of Divine Grace in the people's hearts, and to call forth new response of faith and devotion in their wills and lives.

Here, then, we have a clearer analogy to the

[1] Isa. xl. 12–26. See G. A. Smith's exposition, *Expositor's Bible*.

function of sacramental ordinances, viewed as means of grace, than in the use of the testimony of Creation as an argument for natural religion. For the process of thought is not from Nature to God, as from the known to the unknown, but from God revealed through His word to God declared in Nature, as in a sacrament.

And yet, if we accept the elastic idea of the Sacramental Principle, as the mediation in any way and for any purpose of that which is mental or spiritual through physical means, we must allow for the operation of the principle in natural religion ; for religion based on natural phenomena is one of the most universal of its applications.

For illustration of this point we may refer to St. Paul's language in Romans i. 19 :

That which may be known of God is manifest in them ; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity.

The Apostle's addresses to the heathen audiences at Lystra and at Athens followed the same line of thought.[1] At Athens it was not merely creation in general that was appealed to as a sacrament of God, but also the nature of man in particular, as the highest form of the natural sacrament.

In Him we live, and move, and have our being ; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring. Being then the offspring

[1] Acts xiv. 15 ff., xvii. 24 ff.

of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man.

In these various indictments of heathenism there is a clear indication of the condition which has to be fulfilled, if the sacrament of Nature is to have a wholesome effect or operation. That condition is a right co-operation of mind and will. The objectivity of God remains true, the sacramental function of nature remains valid, but unless man uses his mind for the apprehension of the truth mediated, and his will for the acceptance of, and surrender to that truth, the Sacrament is operative only for condemnation.[1] There is no place for an *ex opere operato* efficacy in the sacrament of Nature.

This condition is not an arbitrary decree, but is required by the laws which govern human nature. The mind is the only faculty in man which can entertain knowledge, and it is only through the co-operation of the mind that physical elements can be the means whereby truth is communicated and received. God may act directly on the human mind through His Spirit in ways of which we have little cognisance, but through physical element He can only impart truth to us in so far as we are able to perceive the significance of the material sign, and are willing to accept the truth which it conveys. And this in theological language is faith ; for what perception is for the mind, that faith is for the spirit. Both are essential for spiritual

[1] Acts xvii. 30; Rom. i. 20 *ff.*

feeding: for though mental apprehension does not necessarily lead to faith, faith cannot exist without mental apprehension. Mind and spirit must co-operate, if the sacrament of Nature is to be, not merely an effectual sign of God's wisdom, power and love, but also a means whereby He works invisibly in us, and quickens and confirms our faith in Him.

CHAPTER II

THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE IN SOCIAL LIFE

INASMUCH as the Sacraments of the Gospel are a part of the Divine scheme for the redemption of man, and exist for man's benefit, it is obvious that they are intended to meet some particular need of man's nature, and to utilise some particular avenue of influence which human nature provides. It is therefore to the social life of man, the life of mutual intercourse, that we shall look with the greatest hope and confidence for illustration of the governing ideas and the underlying principle of the Sacraments. It is possible, of course, that the particular evidence which pertains to them will lead us to the conclusion that they are unique institutions of the Gospel system, unique both in their nature and in their mode of operation; but in that case we must abandon the use of analogy, and cease to talk about the general Sacramental Principle.

Reason and evidence alike, however, suggest that there has been adaptation of existing use and custom in God's dealings with man; and we shall not be surprised if we discover that the Sacramental system is an illustration, and particular adaptation for the purposes of grace, of an ordinary pheno-

menon of social life. Our next step, therefore, is to examine possible analogies in the life of mutual intercourse between man and man.

One of the first necessities of human existence is the association of mental attitude with physical action. The fact that man is a physical as well as a moral and spiritual being means that he is dependent for all 'the give and take' of social life upon his bodily organs. He has to form his judgments by means of what he sees, hears, touches, feels: he reveals his mind and character by what he says and does. His mind, which holds the key of his heart, demands the use of his body for the processes alike of apprehension and of communication.

The use of the lips for the purpose of speech is such a bodily action; but spoken words by themselves are not always accepted as a sufficient form of self-expression. They only bring into use the organs of speech and hearing, and there are other bodily organs which can be made to contribute to the giving and receiving of assurance. Hence from earliest times man has sought for the confirmation of words by actions which involve the other powers of sight, touch, and feeling. The result is that words and actions are often set over against each other as belonging to two different categories of physical expression: and it is often the case that words are only accepted as valid when they have been confirmed by actions. This applies with special force to those transactions between man and man which claim recognition by society at large.

And here a further point must be noticed. The validity of a transaction which claims recognition by society depends on words being confirmed, not merely by other bodily actions, but by other *ordained* bodily actions. Society has to appoint either by law or by custom the signs which it is prepared to recognise as giving validity to the declaration of attitude. A man may express in many ways his love and devotion to the woman whom he marries, but the sign and seal of the marriage contract, which society has agreed to recognise, is the giving and receiving of the ring. A man transfers a property to another mentally when he decides to do it, verbally when he announces the gift, actually when he hands it over for the other's possession ; but, if he wishes society to recognise the transfer as valid, he must sign and seal a deed of conveyance, which is yet another mode of giving, that of formal donation.[1]

This principle of embodying attitudes, mental processes, and words in actions (often symbolical in their form) for the purpose of confirmation, and in *ordered* actions for the purpose of social recognition and validity, permeates the whole of human life. It is not surprising, therefore, that it should enter into the dealings of God with man. The necessity

[1] It is worthy of note in this connection that in the covenant Service of Holy Matrimony the man is represented as transferring all his worldly goods to the woman at the moment of the giving of the ring, the very last moment when the actual transfer takes place, if at all. It is the language of formal donation. The bearing of this upon the language of the Baptismal Offices should be noticed.

of it lies not with God, but with man ; for He who searcheth the heart needs no words or signs for His own sake. It is for this reason that the significance of the Sacraments is primarily that of Divine promise or gift.

In the case, however, of covenant relation between God and man, which requires human consent and co-operation through the fulfilment of covenant conditions, the sign which exhibits, seals, and presents the Divine gift is also the sign which exhibits, seals, and presents man's fulfilment of the conditions. Hence it comes about that the Sacraments meet a further need of man than that of being certified of God's gift, for they provide also an ordered means of his self-expression towards God. In both of these respects the Sacraments are manifestly an adaptation of human custom dictated by the requirements of social life. For the embodying of mental attitude in ordered or customary symbolical action is determined not merely by a man's desire to have the attitude of another confirmed, and recognised by society, but also by the desire to confirm, and secure social recognition of, his own attitude. This craving for ordered self-expression is so deep-rooted in man that, if there had been no ordained Sacraments of the Gospel, some method of meeting the need would have been devised in the Church. Even as things are, we see the tendency at work in the multiplying of ceremonial actions, and in the development of ritual.

In ordinary social life, the purpose of such

actions is, as we have noticed, the confirming of attitude, the ratifying of promise, the exhibiting and formal donating of gift. They are signs and seals of promise and donation. But this does not mean that they have no other effect than that of declaring and confirming. For in respect of the donor, the action, whose primary purpose is to express and confirm attitude, involves an intensifying of the attitude which it expresses: and in respect of the recipient, the confirmatory action leads to assurance, and otherwise produces effects in the sphere of character and conduct.

It is important that we should take notice of this fact, because it warns us against the conception that the Sacraments can only be true means of grace, if they are properly causative of the things which they signify. As a matter of fact, there can be no higher work of grace in the heart of man than that of the deepening and strengthening of faith in, and love of, the Lord: and ordinances which are in their *nature* signs of Divine gift, and have for their *purpose* the sealing of Divine donation and human acceptance, and, rightly used, produce as their *effects* the strengthening of faith in the Divine Giver, the receiving of assurance as to the bestowal and possession of the gift, and the intensifying of devotion and self-surrender to the Giver, such ordinances are the instruments and means of the very highest work of the Holy Spirit in the heart and life.

That the Church of England, in her official teaching, proclaims this as the category of things

to which the Sacraments of the New Covenant belong, appears to be settled by the use of the terms *sign* and *seal* to express their nature and mode of operation, and by the emphasis which is laid upon faith in respect both of their use and of the effects of their ministration.[1]

A sign which is also a seal is something which effects more than mere signification and representation: it is the symbolical expression of mind and embodiment of word, which confirms promise, exhibits gift, and effects visible and sensible donation.

A seal which is also a sign is something which is essentially other than the thing signified, and may not be identified with it. It is not something which contains and conveys the thing signified as some added or inherent quality or virtue, after the manner in which medicine contains healing virtue, or a conduit conveys water, for then it would cease to be a sign. That which is at once sign and seal can be related to its invisible counterpart in only one way, and that is as being the instrument of visible donation through symbolical representation. And it is this which constitutes the difference between bare signs and *effectual signs*.[2] A bare

[1] See Article sxxv.–xxix.

[2] The following words of Bishop Jewel illustrate the conception of effectual signs:

We feed not the people of God with bare signs and figures, but teach them that the Sacraments of Christ be holy mysteries, and that in the ministration thereof Christ is set before us even as He was crucified upon the Cross; and that therein we may behold the remission of sins and our reconciliation unto God, and, as Chrysostom briefly saith, 'Christ's great benefit and our salvation.' Herein we teach the people, not that a naked sign or token, but

sign merely signifies, after the manner of a picture, portrait, stained glass window, or crucifix: an effectual sign exhibits, estates, and donates after the manner of the sealing of a title-deed, the giving of the marriage ring, or the crowning of the sovereign.

The Sacraments of the Gospel are signs, and as such are not to be identified with the things which they signify: they are effectual signs (the efficacy being determined by the appointment of Christ), and as such they are the means of the visible donation of the things which they signify.

that Christ's body and blood indeed and verily is given unto us; that we verily eat it; that we verily drink it; that we verily be relieved and live by it; that we are bones of His bones, and flesh of His flesh; that Christ dwelleth in us and we in Him. Yet we say not either that the substance of the bread and wine is done away; or that Christ's body is let down from heaven, or made really or fleshly present in the Sacrament. We are taught, according to the doctrine of the old fathers, to lift up our hearts to heaven and there to feed upon the Lamb of God. . . . Thus spiritually and with the mouth of faith we eat the body of Christ and drink His blood, even as verily as His body was verily broken and His blood verily shed upon the Cross. . . . Indeed the bread that we receive with our bodily mouths is an earthly thing, and therefore a figure, as the water in Baptism is likewise also a figure; but the body of Christ that thereby is represented, and there is offered unto our faith is the thing itself and no figure. And in respect of the glory thereof, we have no regard unto the figure. Therefore St. Bernard, alluding to the same, saith thus: 'The seal is nothing worth: it is the inheritance that I sought for.'

To conclude, three things herein we must consider: first, that we put a difference between the sign and the thing itself that is signified. Secondly, that we seek Christ above in heaven, and imagine not Him to be present bodily upon the earth. Thirdly, that the body of Christ is to be eaten by faith only, and none otherwise.—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i, 448 f., P.S.E. See also Dimock, *Doctrine of the Sacraments*, pp. 14, 16, 19 ff., 24 ff., 93. Ed. Longmans.

CHAPTER III

THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE IN THE OLD COVENANT

THE redemption of man has from the earliest times been worked out along the lines of covenant relationship with God. The covenant has consisted primarily in a promise of God certified and sealed by an appointed sign. The earliest mention of such covenant dealing is the promise given to Noah, with the appointment of the rainbow as the seal. No condition was attached to this promise: it was a covenant in which God alone was the acting party, and man was merely the beneficiary. Similar in character was the covenant which God made with Abraham: it consisted of a promise to Abraham and his seed, and it had circumcision as the sign and seal.[1]

But in the course of time, when Israel had become a nation and had received the nucleus of the Law, the rite of circumcision received an added significance. Henceforth it was the seal, not only of God's covenanted relationship to Israel, but also of Israel's covenanted relationship to God.[2] The renewal of the covenant at Mount Sinai in-

[1] Gen. xvii. 11. [2] Rom. ii. 25 ff.

volved the acceptance by Israel of the revealed Law;[1] and the sign of the covenant became a pledge from man to God as well as from God to man. The manner in which this covenant with Abraham and Israel was made and ratified calls for notice. Abraham was bidden to slay animals, divide the carcases, and lay each half over against the other half, leaving a passage between.[2] When darkness had come on, the promise was renewed and a flaming torch passed between the pieces, and the *Lord made a covenant with Abram.*[3] This was God's answer to Abraham's question, *Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?*[4] The satisfying of man's need of being certified through visible sign is the first element in the Sacramental Principle; and the process whereby the covenant with Abraham was made was as sacramental in its nature as the rite of circumcision whereby it was afterwards maintained.

But to return to the process, the point to notice is that it involved the surrender of life, the life of the animals slain. It was an instance of Divine accommodation to human infirmity, and Divine adaptation of human method. When a covenant was made, the death of the maker had to be put into evidence, this being the nearest approach that man could secure to the declaration of irrevocability.[5] A covenant was accordingly only valid *over dead things.*[6] In the case before us it

[1] Ex. xxiv. 3.
[2] Gen. xv. 9 f.
[3] Gen. xv. 18.
[4] Gen. xv. 8.
[5] Heb. ix. 16 ff. Comp. Jer. xxxiv. 18 ff.
[6] ἐπὶ νεκροῖς, Heb. ix. 17.

appears that God made use of this established custom. The flaming torch represented His Presence passing between the pieces, and He declared the validity of His promise by accommodating Himself to that symbolical death in respect of it.

Similar in significance, though different in ritual, was the process whereby the covenant was renewed by Moses on Mount Sinai. Death was put into evidence by the slaying of the victims, and the symbolical declaration of a lasting agreement was effected through the sprinkling of the blood. The blood was sprinkled first upon the altar, as representing God, and then, after their promise of obedience, upon the people ; and, as Moses sprinkled the blood on the people, he said, *Behold, the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.*[1]

These ratifyings of the Covenant through the shedding of blood provide for us the interpretation of that aspect of the death of the Lord Jesus, according to which it is viewed in relation to the New Covenant.[2] The eternity of the New Covenant was declared, not by the symbolical representation of death, but by the fact that the Lord Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, died. The New Covenant was made in His blood, which was ' the blood of the everlasting covenant.' His death was both the means of atonement and the ratifying of the covenant whereby the Atonement was provided.

[1] Ex. xxiv. 8. Comp. Heb. ix. 19 ff.

[2] St. Matt. xxvi. 28 ; St. Mark xiv. 24 ; St. Luke xxii. 20 ; 1 Cor. xi. 25 ; Heb. x. 29, xiii. 20.

It is in the light of this fact that we are bidden to think of the consecrated elements in the Lord's Supper. The bread is the Body of the Lord Jesus, not under any condition, but as given for us: the wine is the blood of the Lord Jesus, not under any condition, but as the blood of the New Covenant, shed for the remission of sins. As we partake of those sacred elements we proclaim the Lord's death.[1] In the Supper our attention is focussed upon Calvary, its significance and its benefits.[2]

Let us now retrace our steps. We have been considering the sacramental making and ratifying of the Old Covenant: it remains for us to notice the provision for its sacramental continuance. The covenant relation was continued through circumcision. There were other signs and manifestations of the covenant, which might be spoken of as sacramental, in the broad sense of the term, such as the Sabbath,[3] the Ark,[4] the Tables of the Law,[5] the Passover: but the Sacrament of admission to the covenant relationship was circumcision. To ignore this was to break the covenant.[6]

The importance of the ordinance did not consist in the possession by it of any inherent virtue or efficacy, but in the fact that it was the appointed token of the covenant, the sign to which the promises were attached,[7] the seal of the blessings which were

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 26.
[2] See below, pp. 81 ff.
[3] Ex. xxxi. 16.
[4] Num. x. 33.
[5] Deut. ix. 9.
[6] Gen. xvii. 14.
[7] Gen. xvii. 11.

provided for those who shared in Abraham's faith and obedience.[1] The experience of Abraham is used by St. Paul to prove that the spiritual blessing was not dependent on the ordinance, but on faith: the necessity of the ordinance consisted in its being, not the conduit, so to speak, of the blessing, but the ordered sign and seal, whereby the blessing was put into evidence and visibly donated.

We shall have to deal in a later chapter with the question as to whether the Sacraments of the Gospel belong to a different category from those of the Old Covenant:[2] it must suffice here to say that the nature of the Old Covenant Sacraments as signs and seals creates a probability that the function of the New Testament Sacraments is similar. It is on the face of it extremely improbable that in the Christian Church, which possesses so little original institutionalism, the Sacraments should have been intended to fulfil a more exalted function than they did in the Jewish Church, which was institutional through and through. There are many matters in which the two Dispensations present contrast rather than comparison, such as the nature and manner of revelation, propitiatory offering, priesthood, institutionalism: but to find a contrast in the matter of Sacraments, which would make the Gospel more institutional than the Law, would involve a reversal of first principles which is almost inconceivable.

[1] Rom. iv. 11 ff.

[2] See below, pp. 35 ff.

NOTE

That the suggestion of analogy between the Sacraments of the Old Covenant and those of the Gospel is not a new line of thought may be seen from the following references to Patristic and Reformation writings.

Bishop Jewel repudiates as a fantasy the mediæval conception that *the sacraments of the new law work the thing itself that they signify, through virtue given unto them by God's ordinance to special effects of grace,* on the ground that the Sacraments of the old law and of the new in truth and substance are one.

He quotes in support of his position the following words of St. Leo, *The Sacraments are altered according to the diversity of the times, but the faith whereby we live in all ages was ever one :* and of St. Augustine, *These things were sacraments, in the outward tokens diverse ; but in the things tokened all one with ours :* also, *The Law and the prophets had sacraments shewing before a thing that was to come : but the sacraments of our time do witness that the thing is already come that by those sacraments was signified.*—Jewel, *Works,* ii. 610, iii. 447. P.S.E.

Archbishop Cranmer quotes the same passage of St. Augustine for the same purpose ; and he adds, after a statement of the difference, *Nevertheless the eating and drinking is all one ; for neither the fathers did, nor we do eat carnally and corporally with our mouths, but both the fathers did, and we do eat spiritually by true and lively faith.* —Cranmer, *Works,* i. 75. P.S.E.

Becon, chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer, speaking of the need of Sacraments, says that the purpose of them is that we may be taught both corporally and spiritually. *Whatsoever the Holy Ghost saith inwardly unto us, the very same doth the Word of God to our ears, and the Sacraments to serve our eyes, preach, declare and set forth outwardly :* and he adds, *This hath been the property of God not only in the New, but also in the Old Testament. For as in the old*

law he gave to the Jews Circumcision and the Passover, so likewise in the new law hath he given to us Christians Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He defines the difference between the Sacraments of the Old and New Testaments: *The Sacraments of the Old Testament were figures and shadows of Christ to come; but the Sacraments of the New Testament do signify, declare, and set forth unto us that Christ is come, and has perfectly fulfilled in his flesh whatsoever was prefigured and afore shadowed of him in the old sacraments and ceremonies.* In a later passage he adds to this statement of difference two more points: (1) The old sacraments had promises of corporal benefits annexed to them; the Christian sacraments have adjoined unto them promises of spiritual and heavenly benefit. (2) The old sacraments only appertained to the Jewish nation: the Christian sacraments are universal in their application.

The conception that the difference lies in the alleged *ex opere operato* communication of grace through the Christian Sacrament he repudiates as a Papist innovation, contrary to the Word of God, injurious to the grace of God and the dignity of faith, and ruled out by experience.—Becon, *Works*, pp. 201 f., 217 f. P.S.E.

Bishop Hooper: *As well was the promise of eternal life made unto them as unto us; . . . as well was Christ delivered unto them in the use of their sacraments, as unto us; but not so openly, because He was not then born, nor had suffered the death that their sacraments represented, as ours do, declaring unto us what Christ hath done for us, that now sitteth at the right hand of God the Father: so that the sacraments of the Old Testament and the New in effect be one; and give a right censure and judgment of the one, and then are we instructed aright in both.—Early Writings*, p. 126. P.S.E.

The Christian Sacraments *are the same in effect with the sacraments of the old law, saving they signified Christ to come, and ours declare and signify Christ to be passed bodily out of the world; and that the elements and matter of our sacraments is changed from theirs.—Ibid.* p. 200.

The sacraments be not changed, but rather the elements of the sacraments.—Later Writings, pp. 30, 88. P.S.E.

Rogers : *According to the nature thereof, a sacrament is a covenant of God, His favour to man confirmed by some outward sign or seal instituted by Himself ; which also hath been sometimes special, either to some men, and that extraordinarily by things natural sometimes, as the tree of life was to Adam, and the rainbow to Noah ; and sometimes by things supernatural, as the smoking furnace was to Abraham, the fleece of wool to Gideon, and the dial to Hezekiah ; or to some nation, as the sacrifices, Circumcision, and the Paschal Lamb were to the Jews : and sometimes to the whole Church militant, and ordinarily, as in the time of the Gospel.—Articles*, p. 251. P.S.E.

Bullinger : *This we hold for a certainty out of the Scriptures, that there is but one everlasting and unchangeable God and Lord of either Church* [i.e. of the Old and New Testaments] ; *that there is but one faith in Him through Christ of either Church ; that there is but one way laid down in either Church to attain to the promises of salvation : to be short, that there is but one Church of the only living God, gathered out of either people, both of the Jews and Gentiles. . . . Therefore have they also the selfsame sacraments, saving that ours are given under other signs, and for that through the revelation of the Sun of Righteousness, I mean Christ, are made more lightsome and manifest.—Decades*, iv. 298. Camb. 1852.

If it be not lawful to reason from the sacraments of the Old Testament, and by them after a certain comparison to interpret ours, and by ours to make them plain ; truly then the Apostle did not well, who by false consequent by comparison we read to have argued from their sacraments unto ours, in 1 *Cor.* x. *and Coloss.* ii.—*Ibid.* 290.

See also Tyndale, *Works*, i. 350, iii. 245 ff. P.S.E.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW COVENANT

ONE of the first requisites for a right appreciation of the place and function of the Sacraments in the Gospel system is to recognise the fact that they are not isolated, disconnected, independent ordinances, but that they belong to, and their functions are determined by, the revelation of the New Covenant. This revelation governs and underlies the whole of the Christian system, and it is only in the light of the revelation that the institutionalism of the Gospel can rightly be interpreted.

What, then, are the terms of the New Covenant? What is the Gospel? Is it the good news of the institution of ordinances which are energised with Divine grace and power? Ask the evangelist whose mission it is to preach the Gospel, whether in the Mission Field or in the streets of our home cities. Has he any chance of fulfilling his task, if he preaches the Sacraments as a man might tell a crowd about vaccination? Ask St. Paul, who claims that he begat the Christians at Corinth through the Gospel, and in the same breath says that he baptized none of them, save Crispus and

Gaius and the household of Stephanas.[1] It was through preaching and teaching that St. Paul became the spiritual father of those people, and the subject of his preaching was Jesus Christ and Him crucified.[2] St. Paul was able to speak of the terms of the Gospel without reference of any kind to the institutions of the Gospel. He defines *the word of faith which we preach:* it is, *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*[3] He enumerates the steps which lead up to this state of salvation as the sending of the preacher, the preaching, the hearing, the believing. He summarises the process in the words, *Belief cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*[4]

In this ultimate analysis of the terms of the New Covenant St. Paul makes no reference to the Sacraments, because the central message of the Gospel is *Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved.*[5] This does not mean that the preaching of Jesus dispenses with the necessity of sacramental ministrations, or that faith in Jesus dispenses with the use of ordinances; but it does mean that the place and function of the ordinances are such that the Gospel can be expressed in terms which do not include them. It means that the relation

[1] 1 Cor. i. 14 ff., iv. 15. [2] 1 Cor. ii. 2.
[3] Rom. x. 8 ff. [4] Rom. x. 17.
[5] Acts xvi. 31.

between the ordinances and the Gospel is such that they have to be related to the Gospel, rather than that the Gospel has to be related to them.[1] It means, not that the Gospel consists of a setting forth of the glory of the ordinances, but that the ordinances exist for the purposes of setting forth the Gospel and assisting its acceptance. The ministry of the Word and Sacraments is not the same thing as the ministry of the Word and the ministry of the Sacraments. They are not two separate and disconnected ministries, but one ministry in two forms. The Sacraments are *visible words* embodying in ordained sign the content of the Gospel message. They are *signs to which the promises are annexed.*[2]

The *exact signification* of Sacraments is defined in the Homily *Of Common Prayer and Sacraments* by the words, *Visible signs expressly commanded in the New Testament, whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness of our sin and of our holiness and joining in Christ.*

It has been said that the Word is the means of knowledge, and the Sacraments are the means of grace. The two statements separately considered are true; but taken together, and viewed as an antithesis, they involve a serious error. For the primary and fundamental means of grace is that which imparts the knowledge. The Lord's definition

[1] See Dimock, *Doctrine of the Sacraments*, pp. 18 ff.

[2] *Among other causes, the Sacraments serve specially to direct and to aid our faith. For they are, as St. Augustine calleth them, verba visibilia, visible words, and seals and testimonies of the Gospel.*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, iii. 558. P.S.E.

of eternal life is this: *That they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.*[1] Now it can be granted at once that this knowledge is no merely mental perception: the devils knew Christ, but they were strangers to eternal life. It is heart-knowledge, which involves love, devotion, and obedience, that is manifestly intended; the same kind of relation as is expressed, from the opposite point of view, in the words *The Lord knoweth them that are His.* But while we insist on this, we have to remember that such heart-knowledge necessarily includes, and has to begin with, the knowledge of the mind.

We are here face to face with a natural law. It is only as we get to know a person with the mind, and grow in the mental knowledge, that we can acquire and grow in a personal love. The access to the heart lies through the mind. If it is true that the heart holds the key of the life, it is equally true that the mind holds the key of the heart. This law of our being requires us to regard grace and knowledge of the Lord as correlative terms. The only reason why we can be commanded to grow in grace, is because we can be commanded to grow in knowledge.[2] Grace and peace are multiplied unto us through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.[3]

We cannot divide up the ministry of the Word and Sacraments into two ministries, involving different effects. It is only because of their relation to the Word that the Sacraments are means

[1] St. John xvii. 3. [2] 2 Pet. iii. 18. [3] 2 Pet. i. 2.

of grace.[1] Moreover, the order contained in the phrase *the Word and Sacraments* is not a capricious choice, determined by a certain set of sympathies: it is the only possible order. In the language of St. Augustine, the Sacraments are visible words.

As a standing witness to this conception, we have the fact that from the earliest times the reading of the Gospel has occupied an honoured

[1] Compare:

Put the words of God unto the element, and it is made a sacrament. For what power is there so great of the water that it toucheth the body and washeth the heart, saving by the working of the Word? Not because it is spoken, but because it is believed; and this is the word of faith which we preach.—St. Augustine, *In Joan. Tract.* 80; quoted by Bishop Jewel, *Works*, i. 123. P.S.E.

This marvellous conjunction and incorporation is first begun and wrought by faith . . . afterward the same incorporation is assured unto us and increased in our baptism: . . . and for that we are very imperfect of ourselves, and therefore must daily proceed forward, that we may grow into a perfect man in Christ, therefore hath God appointed that the same incorporation should be often renewed and confirmed in us by the use of the holy mysteries. Wherein must be considered that the said holy mysteries do not begin, but rather continue and confirm this incorporation.—*Ibid.* 140 f.

That duly receiving the holy sacraments ordained by Christ we receive also the remission of sins, it is not any way denied. For the substance of all sacraments is the word of God, which St. Paul calls 'the word of atonement' (verbum reconciliationis). This word is the instrument of remission of sin. The Sacraments are the seals affixed to the same: the priest is the mean. St. Augustine saith: In the water it is the word of God that maketh clean. Take the word away, and what is water else but water?—*Ibid.* iii. 353.

St. Augustine calleth the sacraments 'words visible,' for that in them, as in lively images, the death of Christ is sensibly set before our eyes. For the word of God is the substance and life of all sacraments; and without the same sacraments whatsoever are no sacraments.—*Ibid.* 365. See also 462 f.

place at the Eucharist. The English Reformers, by the provision that a sermon was to form part of the English Communion Service, as well as by the addition of the Comfortable Words, added still further emphasis to the necessity of relating the Sacrament to the Word.

This basic position of the Word in the operations of grace, and of faith in man's co-operation with God, can be abundantly illustrated from the New Testament. Thus the seed from which the fruit is produced is the Word : [1] and the way in which the seed is received is by hearing—that is to say, any means whereby the knowledge is acquired. The means whereby the Holy Ghost was received by Cornelius and his family was the hearing of the Word.[2] It was after they had received the Holy Ghost that they were baptized. This incident is sometimes explained as abnormal, and due to the fact that an extraordinary process was necessary in order to convince Peter that Gentiles were to be received into the Church. But the answer to this is that it has been the normal process ever since in the similar circumstances of the Mission Field, and in the Evangelistic work of the Church among nominal Christians.

The normal title for Christians in the early days was *the believers*, a title which sufficiently indicates the centrality of the Word and of faith. St. Paul's description of the whole armour of God, wherewith the Christian is to wage his fight against principalities and powers, includes the Word of God as the sword

[1] St. Mark iv. 14 ff. [2] Acts x. 44 ff.

of the Spirit, the only offensive weapon, and truth as the girdle of the loins, and faith as the shield :[1] but this description of the whole armour of God contains no reference to the use of the Sacraments. The omission is entirely intelligible to the man who regards the Sacraments as belonging to the Word as its signs and seals : but it would be very difficult to explain, if St. Paul's doctrine of the Sacraments were understood to mean that they are the separate and independent vehicles of the grace of God. It would be no explanation to say that they were so well accepted as such that the Apostle was able to assume the point, because, if there was anything that he could have assumed, it was faith, prayer, and knowledge of the Gospel ; but these are the very elements which he emphasises.

In his letter to the Philippians St. Paul mentions the grounds of confidence which he might have enjoyed as a Jew, and in the forefront he places circumcision and membership by birth of the institutional Church of Israel. What were the things which counted in the exchange which he made when he became a Christian ? What an opportunity of showing that the institutionalism of Israel had given place to the higher and better institutionalism of Christianity ! Yet St. Paul flings away the opportunity, and says that he gave up everything, and counted his Judaism positive injury, because of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.[2] A similar phenomenon is presented in his words, *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision*

[1] Eph. vi. 11 ff. [2] Phil. iii. 4 ff.

availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.[1] The *new creation*, which in a later passage[2] is mentioned as the one thing essential for a Christian, is evidently the same process, viewed from the standpoint of Divine operation, as faith working by love, which is the human counterpart. In the Epistle of St. James the regeneration of the Christian by God is attributed to the Word of truth as the instrument; that this means the message of the Gospel is evident from the exhortation which follows, *Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only.*[3] In the First Epistle of St. Peter the new birth is likewise attributed to the word of good tidings which is preached unto men.[4]

It should be noticed here that it is not man's response in conversion which is thus attributed to the Word, but God's work of begetting, and the experience of new birth. The Apostles were able to speak of the process without so much as a reference to Baptism; and, if our doctrine is to claim Apostolic authority, it must accord this same centrality to the Word and to faith. Baptism is the seal of the promise, the visible donation of the blessing, the embodiment of the faith. It is the sign alike of the grace and of the profession, but is not properly causative of either. *Ye are all sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.*[5]

[1] Gal. v. 6.
[2] Gal. vi. 15.
[3] St. James i. 18 ff.
[4] 1 Pet. i. 23 ff.
[5] Gal. iii. 26 f.

No words could more clearly illustrate the relation. That which determines the sonship is faith, and Baptism is the ordered and visible equivalent, wherein the experience receives its outward and bodily expression.

Membership of Christ is essentially a spiritual state, involving and effected by the possession of His Spirit.[1] Sonship of God is essentially a spiritual experience, involving and determined by submission to the Spirit of God.[2] Relationship to the Lord Jesus is essentially a condition of heart, involving and determined by the doing of the will of His Father.[3] The spiritual nature carries with it the mind of the Spirit : and the mind of the flesh is as incompatible with being in the Spirit, as the mind of the Spirit is incompatible with being in the flesh.[4] The question as to the continuing in death or the entrance into the new life is determined by the participation in the Divine Nature, which is love. *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren : he that loveth not, abideth in death.*[5] *Love is of God, and every one that loveth hath been begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.*[6]

All these varied expressions of the New Covenant method, conditions, requirements, and blessings make it abundantly manifest that our thoughts about salvation have to be focussed upon spiritual

[1] Rom. viii. 9.
[2] Rom. viii. 14.
[3] St. Mark iii. 35.
[4] Rom. viii. 5 ff.
[5] 1 St. John iii. 14.
[6] 1 St. John iv. 7 f.

condition, that the highest work of grace is the production of the fruit of the Spirit in character and life, that this work of grace is essentially dependent upon the knowledge of the Lord, that the word, through which the knowledge is imparted, lies behind all other means of grace, and that the ordinances of religion, viewed as means of grace, take their place amongst the many and varied means whereby the knowledge, faith, and love of the Lord are deepened, confirmed, and strengthened.

The unique character of the Sacraments as the covenant signs and seals of grace, and their unique function as the ordinances of fellowship, secure for them a very special place among these occasions, opportunities, and means of spiritual nourishment and fellowship: and this fact explains the experience of the large number of believers who find in the ministration of the Lord's Supper an atmosphere and a realisation of the Divine Presence, which they do not normally enjoy in the same degree at other times. The Divine Presence is not, objectively considered, less real at other times, nor is grace less available; but the faith, which is the only faculty whereby the spirit can feed upon Christ and hold communion with God, is aroused into more conscious activity through the Sacrament and its atmosphere. At the same time it must be remembered that the power of the Sacrament thus to influence faith is conditioned by knowledge, because faith rests ultimately, not upon ordinances, but upon the knowledge of the Lord who works through them, and of the truth which they

enshrine.[1] And therefore the fact of the experience to which we have referred provides no reason for denying the basic position of the Word, or regarding the Sacraments as independent vehicles of grace.

This is not written in forgetfulness of the Holy Spirit, to whose operation man owes everything in himself that is good and acceptable to God. Whether the means and occasion of spiritual blessing be the Sacraments, or the hearing of the Gospel, or meditation upon Christ, or prayer, or the experiences of life, the blessing itself is the work of the Holy Spirit.

But at the present moment we are concerned with thought, not so much about the Divine worker as about the manner and mode of His operation through particular means. And the position which we have reached is that, according to the revealed and experienced plan of the Holy Spirit's work in man, the institutions of religion are not independent or normally exclusive vehicles of grace, but are dependent for their efficacy as means of grace upon the knowledge of the truth of the Gospel, and share the glory of being instruments of grace with all other means whereby the Holy Spirit carries on His renovating and sanctifying work.

[1] A kiss is normally the sacrament of love, but it may be a cloak of treachery; and that which determines its effect upon friendship is the interpretation which knowledge is able to attach to it.

CHAPTER V

THE SACRAMENTS OF THE GOSPEL

THE considerations which have occupied us up to this point furnish something more than an approach to the study of the Sacraments ; for they have included a summarising of principles which necessarily impose limits as the process of thinking continues, inasmuch as they lie at the heart of the system to which the Sacraments belong. It is the relation of the Sacraments to the system which we now have to discuss. It has been necessary at various points to anticipate certain aspects of the inquiry, but it remains for us to gather up these anticipations, and to expand and complete them in a connected statement.

The Sacraments have functions to fulfil in respect of the life, both of the individual and of the Church. From one point of view they meet needs of man in his capacity as a self-contained personality, for whom a Divine plan of redemption from sin has been provided and revealed. From another point of view, they meet needs of man as bound in the bundle of life with other men, and called to participation in common benefit, common duty, and common destiny.

From the one point of view, the Sacraments gather up into themselves in a certain manner, for the purpose of communication, the gifts of God to the individual man and of the individual man to God, as though the recipient of the Sacrament were the only person between whom and God the giving and receiving takes place. In Holy Scripture the gifts of God are *generally* set forth, that is to say, declared and presented to mankind in general: in the Sacraments the same gifts are particularly set forth, that is to say, exhibited and presented to the individual recipient. True, the Sacraments are *generally* necessary to salvation, in the sense that they are provided and necessary for all men; but they are provided for this purpose among others, namely, to exhibit and present to the individual recipient the covenanted blessings which they signify. Not the least striking feature of the words of administration at the Holy Communion is the emphasis which they lay upon the individual blessing and action: *The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for* thee *preserve* thy *body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for* thee, *and feed upon Him in* thy *heart by faith with thanksgiving.*

From the other point of view, the Sacraments exhibit and effect the merging of the individual in the Body of Christ; and are the means whereby the Body, in its visible capacity, adds to its membership, expresses its fellowship, and manifests its continuity.

The regeneration of the individual through water and the Holy Ghost is at the same time the receiving of him into the ark of Christ's Church, and the admitting of him to the ranks of Christ's army. Similarly the sacramental feeding by the individual upon the Body and the Blood of the Lord through the reception of the consecrated bread and wine is at the same time the joint participation with others in the one loaf, and the manifestation of the communion of saints.

The co-ordination of these two functions of the Sacraments requires careful consideration. It raises important questions concerning the relation of individual experience to the institutionalism of the Christian society. What is the order of thought in respect of the individual and the corporate aspects of the Sacraments? Which precedes the other? Is membership of the visible Church the causative means of the experience of the conditions and blessings which the Sacraments signify for the individual, or is the actual or potential possession, in some measure, of the conditions and blessings by the individual the reason of his admission to the visible Church? To put the question in another form; do the Sacraments effect a unique operation of Divine grace, which is not normally experienced in any other way, or do they give a unique ordered visibility, for the purpose of the confirmation and strengthening of faith, to the grace and good will of God, who works invisibly in us, not only through them, but through many other means besides?

It is no answer to these questions to assert the truth that the Sacraments are the ordinances of the Christian society and not isolated and disconnected rites, and that they may not be separated from the system to which they belong, or treated as independent of the fellowship to which they were entrusted : for these facts determine nothing as to their nature, purpose, and function. The ceremony of graduation is part of the system of the university, and has no value if it be performed as an isolated and disconnected action, unrelated to the authority of the university ; but this fact does not determine the purpose and function of the ceremony, still less does it entitle the ceremony to be regarded as properly causative of the conditions and qualifications of which it is the ordered sign and seal.

Again, it would be mere superficialism to determine the matter by asserting the priority of the existence of the Church to that of the individual, or by pointing to the dependence of the individual upon his environment, or by declaring the indebtedness of the individual for all that he knows of the Christian faith and life to the Church which has preserved and transmitted them ; for this commonplace of individual dependence carries us very little further in the particular discussion. It would only be relevant, if it could be shown that the individual cannot attain to belief in Christ or acquire the spiritual mind without joining the Church. Otherwise it merely emphasises the truth, which everyone readily accepts, that man depends

for his development upon his spiritual, mental, and physical contacts. And this was as true for the original disciples as it is for us, though their Christian experience was independent in its initial stages of the institutions of the organised Christian society.

An alien can become an Englishman in thought and habit, that is to say in experience, without being 'naturalised,' though he owes all that he possesses of thought and habit to the society in which he has moved. In other words, dependence upon society is not the same thing as dependence upon the institutionalism of society.

These illustrations of the ceremony of graduation and of the naturalisation of the alien merely dispose of certain fallacious lines of reasoning: they cannot determine the nature of Christian institutionalism, or define the functions of the Sacraments in respect of the mediation of grace. This can only be done by our having recourse to the evidence, and that consists of the New Testament (as the record of Apostolic experience and teaching) and the phenomena of life.

In a previous chapter we noted the fact that the New Covenant gift of life is in its essence a new nature, which is manifested and discerned under the terms of the fruit of the Spirit, and can be summarily defined as love.[1] The condition re-

[1] Compare:

Would'st thou the life of souls discern?
Nor human wisdom nor divine
Helps thee by aught beside to learn;
Love is life's only sign.

KEBLE.

quired for the experience of the gift is the surrender of the will to God through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. The means whereby this condition is effected is the influence of the Holy Spirit operating through the communication of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Herein lies the fundamental difference between the conditions of the Old and the New Covenants. The former rested on fleshly relation to Israel, the latter rests on spiritual relation to the Lord Jesus Christ. *Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.*[1]

If, then, life is in its essence love, and love depends ultimately only upon knowledge, what place is left for the Sacraments? There remain the very important functions and benefits which belong to the signs and seals of the Covenant; the putting into visibility, through ordained signs, of the blessings and the qualifications. Holy Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are the means of exhibiting for faith's reception the blessings of the New Covenant, not in the sense of mere signification, commemoration, or declaration, such as a picture might effect, but in the sense of sensible donation, whereby the giving and receiving are outwardly and visibly effected, and the invisible work of grace is deepened and increased.[2]

[1] St. Mark iii. 35.

[2] *It is granted of all, without contradiction, that one end of all Sacraments is to join us unto God. . . . Another end is to join us all together. . . . Howbeit, in plain speech, it is not the receiving of the Sacrament that worketh our joining with God. For whosoever is not joined to God before he receive the Sacraments, he eateth and*

They are the signs and seals of the Covenant. A sign of a gift is not necessarily the seal of its donation, and a seal of donation does not necessarily take the form of a sign of the thing given: but the Christian Sacraments are at once the signs and the seals. They both signify and donate, represent and present, exhibit and convey. This it is which distinguishes them from bare signs, and makes them *effectual signs*. A sign of gift is not rendered effectual by being changed in its nature, or by being identified with that which it signifies, or by being properly causative, in any exclusive manner, of the experience of the thing signified: it is effectual as a sign when it is also the authoritative seal of the gift, and the instrument of its visible donation.[1]

drinketh his own judgment. The Sacraments be seals and witnesses, and not properly the causes of this conjunction.—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 131 f. P.S.E.

This marvellous conjunction and incorporation is first begun and wrought by faith. . . . Afterward the same conjunction is assured unto us, and increased in our baptism. . . . And for that we are very imperfect of ourselves, and therefore must daily proceed forward, that we may grow into a perfect man in Christ, therefore hath God appointed that the same incorporation should be often renewed and confirmed in us by the use of the holy mysteries. Wherein must be considered that the said holy mysteries do not begin, but rather continue and confirm this incorporation.—*Ibid* 140 f.

[1] Compare: *We do both think and speak soberly and reverently of Christ's sacraments, as knowing them to be the testimonies of God's promises, and the instruments of the Holy Ghost. And, as we make not the sacrament of baptism bare water, notwithstanding the nature and substance of water remain still; so we make not the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood bare bread and wine. We use the same words and definitions that St. Augustine, and other ancient fathers . . . have used before us: 'A sacrament*

The Christian Sacraments are *effectual signs of grace and God's good will towards us*,[1] because He has appointed them to be the signs and seals of His Covenant gifts. They are effectual signs in respect of grace, only and solely because of God's

is a token (signum) *of a holy thing : a sacrament is a form visible of grace invisible.' Neither do we hereof make a bare or naked token . . . but we say, as St. Paul saith, it is a perfect seal, and a sufficient warrant of God's promises, whereby God bindeth Himself unto us, and we likewise stand bounden unto God, so as God is our God, and we are His people. This I reckon is no bare or naked token. And touching this word* 'signum,' *what it meaneth, St. Augustine sheweth in this sort : ' A sign is a thing that, besides the form or sight that it offereth to our senses, causeth of itself some other thing to come to our knowledge '* (cognitionem). *And hereof it is called a mystery, or a holy secrecy ; for that our eye beholdeth one thing, and our faith another.*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 515. P.S.E.

Moreover, we allow the sacraments of the Church, that is to say, certain holy signs and ceremonies, which Christ would we should use, that by them He might set before our eyes the mysteries of our salvation, and might more strongly confirm our faith which we have in His blood, and might seal His grace in our hearts. And those sacraments, together with Tertullian, Origen, Ambrose . . . and other Catholic fathers, we do call figures, signs, marks or badges, prints, copies, forms, seals, signets, similitudes, patterns, representations, remembrances, and memories. And we make no doubt, together with the same doctors, to say, that those be certain visible words, seals of righteousness, tokens of grace ; and do expressly pronounce that in the Lord's Supper there is truly given unto the believing the body and blood of the Lord, the flesh of the Son of God, which quickeneth our souls, the meat that cometh from above, the food of immortality, grace, truth and life.—Ibid. iii. 62.

Compare also i. 448; iii. 353. See above, pp. 14 f. See also Dimock, *The Doctrine of the Sacraments*, pp. 14, 24; Goode, *Effects of Baptism*, p. 145 ; Calvin, *Tracts*, vol. ii. pp. 135, 214, 224, ed. Calv. Transl. Soc. ; Niemeyer, *Confess. Eccl. Ref.*, pp. 194 f., 338, 680, 682.

[1] Article XXV., *Of the Sacraments.*

appointment. The worthy use of them affects their efficacy as signs of man's profession, and as means of grace, but it cannot affect their efficacy as signs of grace and God's good will towards us.

Here we touch upon a distinction which is important.

The efficacy of the Sacraments as signs of grace does not necessarily involve their efficacy as means of grace. The efficacy of a sign becomes an experienced efficacy if the sign is true in itself, and when it is properly used; but the absence of effect in the experience of a person who fails to make proper use of the sign does not invalidate its efficacy as a sign on the part of the giver. On the other hand, an effectual sign of gift cannot be unproductive of experienced effect, if it be worthily used: and the signs of God's grace and good will, which are effectual signs because of His appointment, cannot be worthily used without their being at the same time effectual means—that is to say, instruments whereby He works invisibly in us.

The statement that Holy Baptism is not properly the cause of our conjunction with Christ is not an assertion that it has no effect upon that conjunction.[1] The fact that the conjunction depends essentially upon faith in the Lord, both for its beginning and continuance, involves the additional fact that every instrument whereby the faith is quickened and confirmed is a means of grace. These means are many and varied, such as meditation on the Holy Scriptures, prayer, the preaching of the

[1] Comp. Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 132, 140 f. See above, p. 28.

Word, the influence of men of faith: and among these means the Sacraments must ever hold an exalted place, because their primary function in respect of the individual is to exhibit and donate visibly to him God's blessings, and so to confirm and strengthen his faith in God. But this is a totally different conception from that which regards the Sacraments as effectual signs, because (according to the theory) they are the normally exclusive depositories of grace which is communicated *ex opere operato*, and is obtainable in no other covenanted way.[1] The uniqueness of the Sacraments consists, not in the invisible work which is done through them, but in their nature as the

[1] There is a series of passages in the Acts and Epistles which declare quite plainly that the institution of the imposition of hands was accompanied by contemporaneous experience of a gift of the Spirit. But these are cases either of the bestowal of spiritual gifts which had immediate and manifest operation, or of endowment for ministry to which the institution admitted the recipient. But such spiritual endowment must be distinguished from the Holy Spirit's work of renewing man's nature. The work of renewal might conceivably take place at the moment of the administration of a Sacrament, if that were the moment at which the recipient yielded his will to God. But that is not the normal experience, for the simple reason that the yielding of the will is the response to the initial revelation; and the initial revelation, which is the instrument of the renewal, seldom coincides in time with the administration of the Sacrament.

The same distinction must be observed in connection with the bestowal of the Holy Spirit upon our Lord at His Baptism, which was manifestly, not the gift for the renovation of nature, but the equipment for ministerial life and work. Moreover, St. Luke's account throws this additional light upon the experience, that while it coincided with the occasion, it did not coincide with the institutional act. (St. Luke iii. 21 f.)

covenant seals and instruments of visible donation.[1] In this respect there is nothing which can take the place of the Sacraments. For a man to ignore and neglect them is not merely to detach himself from appointed means of grace, but also to break the Covenant, in so far as its ordered institutional expression is concerned.

Turning now to the evidence of the New Testament, let us call to mind the Lord's words: *Preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.*[2] There is no room for doubt here as to the order of things. The command is to preach the Gospel, because that is the means whereby faith is produced; and faith is the essential condition of salvation. The complementary condition is Holy Baptism, as being the outward and visible counterpart of faith:[3] but the question of salvation or condemnation turns not on the use of the Sacrament, but on the presence or absence of faith.

St. Matthew's record of the last command is,

[1] Compare: *Notwithstanding that by these means* [the Passion and Resurrection of Christ and our faith] *Christ be in us, and we in Him, yet forasmuch as both our life and faith is imperfect, as we daily desire God to amend our life, and to augment our faith, even so we daily pray that this conjunction between Christ and us may be increased, that Christ may come nearer and nearer unto us, and that we may grow into a perfect man in Him. And to this end God hath specially appointed us His holy Sacraments. . . . Bonaventura saith well: 'We may not in anywise say that the grace of God is contained in the Sacraments, as water in a vessel. For so to say, it were an error. But they are said to contain God's grace, because they signify God's grace.'*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 473.

[2] St. Mark xvi. 15 f. [3] Compare Gal. iii. 26 f.

Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you. . . .[1] This has been explained as involving identification of the making of disciples with the baptizing, as though the words signified, *make disciples by baptizing.* But the only sense in which a disciple can be made by Baptism is that of *status*, profession, and membership of the visible Church. If the making of disciples refers here to experience and state (and can anyone doubt it?), the baptizing represents the additional step of putting the discipleship, effected through the Word, into its ordered visibility; and the teaching is the subsequent instruction which a disciple needs as to the things which he must observe and do.

These two recorded sayings of our Lord are sufficient to illustrate the point that the Sacraments have their corporate significance, and fulfil their social function, as a consequence of their significance for the individual; in other words, that men are admitted to the visible Church because they are actually or potentially believers. It is because the Sacraments are the institutional means of putting into visibility the individual's profession and newness of life, that they are also the institutional means whereby the communion of saints on earth finds its expression and deepens its life.[2]

[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 19 f.

[2] Further treatment of the evidence of the New Testament will be found on pp. 24 f., 29 ff., 67 ff.

The uniting of the individual to Christ through the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ[1] effects as one of its immediate consequences his entrance into the fellowship of the Spirit.[2] This fellowship is, from the point of view of present human experience, an unregisterable company, and is known in its real and true dimensions to God alone. It consists of the saints who have passed within the veil, as well as of the true members of Christ on earth. It is destined to be manifested hereafter as the Bride of Christ. In the meantime there is on earth the outward and visible counterpart of this spiritual fellowship, just as there is the outward and visible counterpart of the spiritual life of the individual; and that is the company of the baptized, in which the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are duly administered in accordance with the ordinances of Christ.

This function of the Sacraments as ordinances of the Christian society, securing and maintaining its ordered expression and continuity, is of inestimable value and importance. Any society of men which aims at permanence, and has to exercise discipline for the purpose of safeguarding a deposit of creed, and of maintaining ideals of life, must be sacramental; and if ordinances of admission and of fellowship are not included in the original deposit, it will sooner or later create them. In the Church of Christ these ordinances are part of the original deposit. If a man ignores them, he not merely

[1] See Rom. viii. 9 f.; 1 Cor. vi. 17; Eph. iii. 16 f.

[2] Rom. viii. 14 ff.; 1 Cor. xii. 13 ff.; Eph. ii. 18 ff., iv. 3 ff.

deprives himself of appointed means of grace; he also refuses to observe the ordered signs of Christian fellowship, cuts himself off from the life of the society, and is guilty of disloyalty to the plain commands of its Divine Founder.

CHAPTER VI

THE EXTENSION OF THE INCARNATION

THERE is a doctrine of the Sacraments according to which they are in their nature and mode of operation a unique creation of the Gospel. The theory claims the support of the general sacramental principle, but in point of fact it presses what are called natural sacraments, such as the expression of love by a kiss, into the service of a conception of the Christian Sacraments, which reduces the analogy to the vanishing point. The only true and proper analogy is to be found, so it is alleged, in the Incarnation. In this view, the Sacramental Principle is not the visible embodiment of word or promise in symbolical action, but the visible embodiment of Divine Presence in material element. The Sacraments have accordingly come to be spoken of as the extension of the Incarnation.

It is comparatively easy to perceive the appropriateness of the phrase, when it is applied to the Lord's Supper by those who believe that the effect of consecration is the attachment of the Spiritual Presence of our Lord to the sacred elements; but it is very difficult to understand it as applied to

the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, unless the phrase be used in a different sense, such as would allow the Sacraments of the Old Covenant to be anticipations of the Incarnation. In this sense, the principle of the Incarnation would be found in the fact that it was the supreme example of the use of that which is physical for spiritual purposes. But this is not the conception. The idea underlying the phrase finds expression in the following words of a leading advocate of the view of the Sacraments now under consideration :

While the elements of bread and wine retain their natural substances, an addition is made to them, by virtue of which the Body and Blood of Christ are present really and truly, but spiritually and ineffably, under the outward visible sign or form of bread and wine.[1]

It is interesting to notice that, in order to maintain this conception of the Lord's Supper, the speaker had to introduce the idea of an essential disparity between the two Sacraments : for whereas Baptism has two essential parts—the outward sign and the inward grace—the Holy Communion has three—the outward sign, the inward grace, and the inward part or thing signified. The theory is based upon the fact that in the Catechism there are only two questions and answers which have to do with the essential nature of Baptism, whereas those which have to do with the essential nature of Holy Communion are three.[2]

[1] Canon Newbolt, *Report of Conference at Fulham*, 1910, p. 54.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

It is an interpretation of the teaching of the Catechism, which involves serious difficulties: for it ignores the fact that the nature of a sacrament is defined as consisting of two parts, and it denies to the sacrament of Baptism an inward part or thing signified, which can only mean that the dipping in water signifies nothing. But the interpretation is as unnecessary as it is unreasonable, for it involves the failure to distinguish between the physical element and the whole ordinance. It is not the ordinance of Baptism which lacks an *inward part or thing signified,* but the element of water considered by itself. In the Holy Communion the elements by themselves have an appointed significance, which has to be distinguished from the significance of the ordinance as a whole. To base upon the additional question in the Catechism, which relates to the thing signified by the bread and wine, an argument for an essential disparity between the nature of the two ordinances is exceedingly precarious; and the position has no support in Patristic and Reformation theology.[1]

[1] Compare: *Forasmuch as, these two Sacraments being both of force alike, these men to advance their fantasies in the one, by comparison so much abuse the other; and especially for the better opening of Chrysostom's mind, I think it good briefly and by the way somewhat to touch what the old Catholic fathers have written of God's invisible working in the sacrament of Baptism. . . . By the authorities of thus many ancient fathers it is plain that in the sacrament of Baptism by the sensible sign of water the invisible grace of God is given unto us. Wherefore, as M. Harding by force of Chrysostom's words proveth his fleshly presence in the one sacrament, so may he by force of the same words as well prove that the power of God, the heavenly fire, the grace and the blood*

This view, however, has to be noticed here as showing that the idea of the extension of the Incarnation is held by some to apply to the one Sacrament and not to the other.

Bishop Gore speaks of the bestowal of the gift in Sacramental form as being in accordance with the twofold nature of man and the principle of the Incarnation.[1] But the question arises as to the sense in which the latter phrase is used. If it means that the Incarnation was the supreme example of the sanctifying of matter to the use of spirit, everyone will admit the truth of the statement: and the use which the Bishop makes of the illustration of *natural sacraments*, such as handshaking and kissing, creates the expectation that this is his meaning. It seems clear, however, from a subsequent passage that the principle of the Incarnation as understood by the Bishop is something much more precise in meaning than the use of material element for spiritual purposes. For he says: *It may be worth while remarking that we have no right to carry out the analogy of the Incarnation and the Eucharist so far as to say that the union of the supernatural and the natural elements*

of Christ is really and fleshly present in the other.—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 465 f. P.S.E.

The Scriptures and holy fathers are acquainted with no such mystery [i.e. *bodily or real presence* in the bread and wine]. *The sacrament of Baptism is a mystery, even as is the sacrament of Christ's body; and, as Christ is present in the one, so is He also present in the other; that is to say, truly, verily, effectually, and indeed; howbeit, not in this gross manner of M. Harding's fleshly presence.*—*Ibid.*, p. 505.

[1] *The Body of Christ*, p. 21

is an indissoluble union in the latter case as in the former. There is in fact an analogy in fundamental principle between the Incarnation and the sacraments, but it does not admit of being carried out in detail.[1]

This statement is interesting as bringing both of the Sacraments into the analogy, and at the same time as indicating that the analogy is found in the element being the tabernacle (though only for a time) of Divine Presence.

We can leave on one side the difficulty of applying this conception to Holy Baptism, as it will be sufficient for our purpose to examine it at its strongest point, and to treat it in relation to the Holy Communion. The first thing to notice is that the Sacrament offers no proper parallel to the Incarnation. The sacred elements are not the equivalent of the living Body of the Lord Jesus. He exercises no manifested control of them, and they in no way express His life and activity. Moreover, by His appointment, the bread is not Himself, but His body broken, as distinguished from His blood shed; and the wine is not Himself, but the blood shed, as distinguished from the body broken.[2] Further, when we partake of the elements, we are not *proclaiming* the glorified Presence of the Lord, but *His death till He come.*[3] Finally, the Incarnation was not the assumption of a material tabernacle for the habitation of the Divine Presence, but it was the Divine Son taking upon Himself human nature, of which body is only a part. To regard

[1] *The Body of Christ*, p. 133.
[2] See below, p. 80 f.
[3] 1 Cor. xi. 26.

the consecration of the elements as offering any parallel to the Incarnation, is to admit an Apollinarian conception of the humanity of Jesus, according to which the Divine Presence took up its dwelling in a human body. On these grounds we must firmly repudiate any proper analogy between the Sacrament and the Incarnation, in the sense of the attachment of Divine Presence to material elements.

In the second place, we must remember that the Presence of the Lord on earth under the terms of flesh and blood was only a temporary accommodation to man's necessities. To believe in its continuance, even in the modified form of symbols of the Body and Blood impregnated with Divine Presence, is to ignore the plain teaching of the Lord about His own withdrawal, and the coming of the Holy Spirit to take His place. *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended* was the Lord's repudiation of that kind of Presence with which the disciples had been familiar up to that time.[1] How comforting it would have been both to Mary and to the other disciples at that stage of their experience to be told that they would be able to touch Him under the form of bread and wine; but where is there any suggestion of such a means of continual Presence? The only substitute offered to them for the mode of the Lord's Presence with

[1] Compare with this, *Handle me and see*; an accommodation required by the absence of conviction. Mary needed, not conviction, but illumination. The Spiritual Body was allowed to be handled for the purpose of the confirmation of faith, but not for the purpose of love and devotion.

which they had been familiar was the Holy Spirit; and His Presence was to be in them.

St. Paul uses in this connection a very bold expression. He says, *Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now know we Him so no more.*[1] Did those early disciples ever forget Jesus Christ as He had lived and moved among men? It was only through that fleshly Presence that they had come to know Him at all, and how could they forget it? The only possible meaning of the words is that they had to take the knowledge, the love, and the devotion, which they had acquired through the Bodily Presence of Jesus, and to attach them to the Jesus of the Spirit, Jesus ever present with them and in them, at all times and in all places, after the manner not of flesh or material element, but of the Spirit—that is to say, after the manner of God. They had learned the meaning of the words, *It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.*[2]

Any idea of the extension of the Incarnation, which associates the Presence of Jesus here and now with His body (and what are we to say of such alleged extension through the representation of His Body and Blood by bread and wine?) appears to be a direct repudiation of His own teaching.

The only sense in which we can speak of the extension of the Incarnation is that of the changing of man into the likeness of Christ. It is only as

[1] 2 Cor. v. 16. [2] St. John xvi. 7.

men reflect His image and witness to Him in their characters and lives, through Christ being formed in them,[1] that any analogy to the Incarnation can now be found.

In the third place, we must remember that the Spiritual Presence of the Lord Jesus is not the presence of His Spiritual Body. It was just this Spiritual Body of the Resurrection that was visibly withdrawn ; it was in this Spiritual Body that He had manifested Himself from time to time during the Forty Days to His Apostles ; it was this Spiritual Body which Mary was forbidden to touch, on the ground that Jesus was not yet ascended ; it was this Spiritual Body which was removed from the view of the Apostles at the Ascension, with the promise that its return would be similarly visible. But in the meantime the Lord Jesus would still be with them ; and this Presence was to be spiritual —that is to say, the Presence through the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus was to be present, after the manner in which the Holy Spirit is present, and the Father is present. Just as the redemptive work of God was effected by the Second Person, ever one God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, so the sanctifying work of God is effected by the Holy Spirit, ever one God with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the revealed means of the Presence of Christ now, and it was in this new capacity as the Vicegerent of the Incarnate Saviour, and the mediator of His Spiritual Presence, that He who had been with man from the beginning was

[1] Gal. iv. 19.

sent and poured forth with manifest signs on the Day of Pentecost.

But this mediating Presence of the Holy Spirit is not associated in any unique and normally exclusive manner with the consecrated elements of the Lord's Supper. True, His mission is to glorify the Lord Jesus, and it is in relation to the Lord that His revealed work in this Dispensation is accomplished; but the mission and work are fulfilled through the Word and sacramental ordinances, and not in any exclusive manner through the Lord's Supper, still less through a unique operation in the elements of the Supper.

CHAPTER VII

SACRAMENTAL LANGUAGE

THE nature of the Sacraments, as the signs and embodiments of spiritual gifts, processes, and conditions, has given rise to a manner of speech which, though quite natural and familiar in ordinary social life, is not always recognised in its ecclesiastical use. The necessity of understanding sacramental language is particularly urgent when we seek to interpret the Sacramental Services. The treatment of liturgical statements, as though they belonged to the same category as the statements of Creeds and Articles, has given rise to much confusion: indeed it is beyond dispute that a prevalent doctrine of Baptism in the Church of England in the present day is based on certain phrases of the Service of Infant Baptism, which are for the purpose isolated from their context, treated as the language of dogma, and interpreted in a way which the dogmatic language of the Church's Articles does not suggest, and the expressed opinions of the framers of the Formularies do not sanction.

A distinguished Oxford divine of the middle of last century, Professor Mozley, was led by the Gorham Controversy to study the doctrine of

Baptism and the Baptismal Services *de novo*; and not the least important result of his thought and study was the published examination of the principle underlying liturgical language, specially that of the Sacramental Services.[1] Dean Goode had treated the subject before him,[2] and after him another master of Patristic and Reformation theology carried on the study.[3] To these three men—Goode, Mozley, Dimock —the Church is greatly indebted. Their reasoning and conclusions have never been overthrown,[4] but they have been only too widely ignored to the great loss of clear thinking on the subject.

In respect of sacramental language, there are two important principles which claim recognition. In the first place, there is the well-known mode of speech according to which the sign can be spoken of in terms which belong properly only to the thing signified. Thus a man can say of the portrait of his father, *That is my father.* Similarly, a man can receive from another the title-deed of a property, the sign and seal of the gift, and can thank him for having given the property to him, without

[1] See Mozley, *A Review of the Baptismal Controversy.*

[2] Goode, *Effects of Baptism in the Case of Infants.*

[3] Dimock, *The Doctrine of the Sacraments.*

[4] This statement must not be taken to mean that there was no difference of opinion between the three writers referred to. There is a very real divergence between the theory of charitable presumption, according to which the words *This child is regenerate* are interpreted by Goode and Mozley, and the theory of visible donation, as expounded by Dimock. But the differences are variations within the one class of thought which recognises the distinction between liturgical and dogmatic language.

prejudice to the question as to whether or when he enters into the actual possession of it. Again, a man places the ring, the token of the marriage contract, on his bride's finger, and is reckoned accordingly as giving to her then and there not only his love and devotion, but also all his worldly goods; but the last moment when the gift of the love is likely to begin, or the endowment is likely to take place, is the moment when the sign is given and the profession made. The reason of this is that the placing of the ring on the finger is the recognised sign of the attitude and gift, and the means and moment of their receiving ordered visibility; and accordingly the use of the sign is accompanied by language which properly belongs only to the process and attitude signified. This principle of sign language was thoroughly recognised by the Fathers and by the Reformers.[1]

In the second place, there has to be noticed the additional fact that liturgical formularies can only be drawn up on the hypothesis of sincere and genuine use—that is to say, on the principle of charitable presumption. The language used has to

[1] Compare: *We must consider that the learned fathers in their treaties of the Sacraments sometime use the outward sign instead of the thing itself that is signified; sometimes they use the thing signified instead of the sign. As for example, sometimes they name Christ's blood instead of the water: sometimes they name the water instead of Christ's blood. This figure is called 'Metonymia,' that is to say, 'an exchange of names'; and is much used among the learned, specially speaking of the Sacraments.* —Bp. Jewel, *Works*, iii. 463, P.S.E. Cf. *ibid.* p. 508.

For a treatment of this point, see Dimock, *The Doctrine of the Sacraments*, pp. 12 ff., 73 f. Ed. 1908, Longmans.

assume that the persons referred to in the services are what they are supposed to be. The Sovereign has to be described as *most religious and gracious*, without regard to the character of the particular occupant of the throne. In the Collects the congregation is constantly represented by language which assumes such qualities as a hearty desire to pray, a refusal to put their trust in anything that they do, a determination to love God above all things. At the Holy Communion, the congregation, one and all, offer their souls and bodies to God, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Him.

The recollection of these two principles which govern the language of the sacramental Services would have saved the Church from much of the controversy which has arisen over the words, *This child is regenerate*; but as things are, the principles have been ignored, and the phrase has been isolated, treated as a dogmatic assertion of experienced condition, and made the ground of a doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration which was not the doctrine of the framers of the Service.

The conception is that *regeneration* takes place at the moment of Baptism. In order to reconcile the idea with the facts of life, the term *regeneration* has been evacuated of any significance of moral change. It is likened to the sowing of a seed, and is regarded as the imparting of a *habit* or capacity which may or may not have moral result. And thus we find ourselves confronted with the extraordinary phenomenon (the normal process

for all baptized as adults) of a man recreated through the Word, morally changed, spiritually renewed, a penitent believer in the Lord Jesus, yet still waiting to receive the seed out of which the fruit is to be produced, the capacity of which the converted state is the development, the germ from which the new life is to grow. For, let it be noted, the very same words, with the one change from *child* to *person*, are used of the adult at his Baptism, *This person is regenerate.* It is manifest that the theory will not work when the subject of Baptism is the adult ; and, unless we are to admit two Baptisms with functions differing in kind, one for infants and one for adults, we must attach another meaning to the phrase in question.

The only explanation that seems to be consonant with the facts, if the phrase is interpreted as a dogmatic statement of the experienced effect of Baptism, is that *regeneration* means admission to the visible Church ; but in this case, the word cannot be regarded as the equivalent of the new birth, the new creation, the being begotten of God, for these scriptural terms involve an essential moral change.

There is another and historically more accurate explanation which recognises the two principles of sacramental language. The first of these principles is that the sign may be spoken of in language which properly belongs only to the thing signified. Baptism is the sign of *regeneration or new birth*, and therefore language which properly belongs only to the spiritual experience can be

used in connection with Baptism. Just as by Baptism a person puts on repentance and faith, and becomes a penitent believer, because Baptism is the sign of repentance and faith, so by Baptism a person is regenerated or new-born, because Baptism is the sign of regeneration or new birth.[1]

Further, since Baptism is the *effectual sign* of the gift, that is to say, the visible embodiment of the giving, the language of donation may be used without any implication as to the experience of the thing donated, still less as to any coincidence

[1] Compare: *If Sacraments had not some points of real resemblance to the things of which they are the sacraments, they would not be sacraments at all. In most cases, moreover, they do in virtue of this likeness bear the names of the realities which they resemble. As, therefore, in a certain manner the sacrament of Christ's body is Christ's body, and the sacrament of Christ's blood is Christ's blood, in the same manner the sacrament of faith is faith. Now believing is nothing else than having faith; and accordingly when, on behalf of an infant as yet incapable of exercising faith, the answer is given that he believes, this answer means that he has faith because of the sacrament of faith, and in like manner the answer is made that he turns himself to God because of the sacrament of conversion, since the answer itself belongs to the celebration of the sacrament. Thus the Apostle says, in regard to this sacrament of Baptism: 'We are buried with Christ by baptism into death.' He does not say, 'We have signified our being buried with Him,' but 'We have been buried with Him.' He has therefore given to the sacrament pertaining to so great a transaction no other name than the word describing the transaction itself. Therefore an infant, although he is not yet a believer in the sense of having that faith which includes the consenting will of those who exercise it, nevertheless becomes a believer through the sacrament of that faith. For as it is answered that he believes, so also he is called a believer, not because he assents to the truth by an act of his own judgment, but because he receives the sacrament of that truth.*—St. Augustine, 'Letter to Boniface,' *Letters*, vol. ii. pp. 22 f. Engl. Transl., Cunningham, T. & T. Clark.

in time between the experience and the visible donation. Such manner of speech is a normal and necessary accompaniment of the act of donation through visible sign, whether it be of money through cheque, of property through title-deed, of love and devotion through marriage-ring, or of forgiveness and spiritual adoption through Baptism.[1]

Then there is the second principle, that Services are drawn up on the basis of charitable presumption. This is applicable in a special degree to such a covenant service as that of Holy Baptism. The statement of the Divine gift is preceded by a statement of human profession. The two sets of statements must be taken together: they may not be isolated and treated as independent dogmatic assertions. The enjoyment of the covenant gifts depends on the fulfilment of the covenant conditions. Hence the language used, when the seal of the gift is administered, is necessarily dependent for its meaning upon the sincerity of the recipient, in so far as it involves his co-operation and experience.

From these considerations there emerge two interpretations of the phrase in question, which are not necessarily alternatives, but may rather be regarded as complementary. From the point of view of the Divine Giver, whose gift of grace was given before the world was,[2] the words *this child is regenerate* are the language of Divine

[1] Compare: *The promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed.*—Article **xxvii.**

[2] See Rom. viii. 28 ff.; Eph. i. 3 ff.; 2 Tim. i. 9.

donation, declaring that the gift has been given, but leaving entirely undetermined the question as to the fact, time, or manner of its actual reception and experience.[1]

From the point of view of the recipient, the words are the language of charitable presumption, it being presumed that the child or person has entered into the enjoyment of the gift, in so far as his capacity makes such enjoyment possible.

These are the true lines of historical interpretation. They involve no watering down of the meaning of *regeneration*, but preserve the scriptural conception of the birth of the Spirit as a moral and spiritual change which is known by its fruit.[2]

It is not merely the Church services which demand for their correct interpretation the recognition of the characteristics of sacramental language: we are confronted, as we might expect, with the same necessity in the language of the New Testament.

Let us examine, for example, the meaning of the phrase *to baptize into*. The formula is not exclusively used of the Christian Sacrament. It had an established and recognised significance in connection with the ministry of the Baptist. His baptism was a baptism *of repentance* and *into repentance*.[3] As so used the preposition *into* did

[1] The only difference of opinion on the part of those who adopt this interpretation is the question (as between Calvinists and Arminians) as to whether the language of Divine donation itself involves the principle of charitable presumption, because of the Calvinistic doctrine of particular election.

See St. John iii. 8.

[2] See St. Matt. iii. 11; St. Mark i. 4.

not signify a relation of cause and effect between the sign and the thing signified. John's baptism did not in a strictly causative sense make the recipient penitent : the experience of repentance was an assumed antecedent condition of the baptism. And yet the penitent was baptized by John *into repentance.* That is to say, the baptism gave ordered visibility to the profession and promise; it admitted the recipient to the recognised *status* of repentance, it received him into the visible fellowship of repentance. When the baptism was worthily used, it must undoubtedly have had the effect of confirming and deepening the state and condition : but this effect is not the thing in view in the use of the phrase *baptism into* : the formula itself signifies the admission to status, and the visible sealing of attitude.

Another illustration of the use of the phrase in a connection other than that of the Christian Sacrament is St. Paul's language in 1 Cor. x. 1 : *Our fathers . . . were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.* The preposition *into* once again signifies a relation between the sign and the thing signified, which is not, strictly speaking, one of cause and effect, for the Israelites had made themselves disciples of Moses before they experienced the separating effects of the cloud and the sea. But the cloud and the sea were means whereby their separation from Egypt and their adherence to Moses as leader were visibly declared and put in evidence. The ' baptism ' must have caused as one of its effects in the faithful Israelites a deepen-

ing and intensifying of their discipleship of Moses: but this is not the significance of the words, *they baptized themselves into Moses.* The relation indicated by that phrase was effected for all alike, whether loyal or disloyal.

Now it seems inconceivable that St. Paul should have referred to the experience of the Israelites under the terms of the Christian Sacraments, if the analogy were false, and the relation expressed by the language were something different from that of the sign and the thing signified in the Sacraments. For we notice that St. Paul uses in this passage the language of both of the Sacraments, doubtless for the purpose of assisting his Christian readers to learn the lesson, and to apply it to themselves. We must assume, therefore, that the preposition *into,* when used in connection with the Sacrament of Baptism, was regarded by St. Paul as connoting the same kind of relationship between the sign and the thing signified, as that of the crossing of the Red Sea to discipleship of Moses. And this assumption is confirmed by the language which he uses when he does refer to the Christian Sacrament.

Of these direct references there is none in which his language is more precise and emphatic than that of the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. He here speaks of the Christian as one who has 'died to sin,' and has been 'buried with Christ through baptism,' wherein also he has been raised to newness of life.[1] At first sight this language

[1] Compare Col. ii. 12.

like all sacramental language, suggests a miracle wrought through and at the moment of the ministration of the Sacrament; but on further thought this conception has to be put on one side, for the very strength of the language forbids its being interpreted of realised condition. It is no question here of receiving a capacity for dying to sin and for living a new life: it is a matter of death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism is, as it were, the tomb in which the dead man has been buried, and from which he has been raised again to a new life. But what place does experience leave for such an effect of Baptism in respect of actual state and condition?

We are not, however, dependent upon this appeal to the facts of life for the interpretation of the language; for the exhortations which follow the assertions place the meaning beyond doubt. The man who has died, and has been buried, and is risen again is exhorted to 'reckon' himself as 'dead unto sin and alive unto God,' and to see to it that sin does not reign in his mortal body. This can only mean that Baptism admits a man to a declared standing and profession, and the man's duty is to conform his life to that standard. Baptism confers in visible form the free gift of justification, and the recipient's response must be a life worthy of the grace. Baptism gives the *status* of burial and resurrection, in respect of sin, and the recipient's duty is to live up to it by cultivating an experienced state of holiness of life.

This was St. Paul's answer to the objector to his doctrine of grace, who said that, if justification

is entirely of grace, and not of works, and if the sin of man causes grace to abound, then men may go on sinning in order that grace may the more abound. The answer is that the baptized man cannot go on sinning, not because Baptism has worked a spiritual miracle of death to sin and resurrection to newness of life, but because in Baptism man is given and accepts the standing of one who has died to sin, and been buried, and is risen again. With this should be compared the words of the final exhortation in the Baptismal Offices of the Prayer Book: *Baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that, as He died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness: continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.* That is to say, the child or adult who (in the words of the Catechism) *has received by Baptism a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness* has now in experience to die unto sin and rise again unto righteousness, and continually mortify his evil affections. Thus the language of the Church is seen to be entirely parallel to that of St. Paul. The interpretation in each case depends upon the recognition of the principle of sacramental language, according to which the sign has to be spoken of in the terms of the experience which it signifies, represents, and symbolises.

The same principle underlies St. Paul's language about the Lord's Supper, when he says: *The cup*

of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?[1] He is able to speak of the physical act as though it were identical with the spiritual experience, because the one is the sign of the other. In the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, however, there is the possibility of a much closer time relationship between the use of the outward sign and the spiritual experience which that use signifies. For whereas Baptism is administered to a person once only, and the grace signified by it is the initial experience of spiritual life, which is not determined in respect of time by the use of the outward sign; the Lord's Supper is related to the constant process of feeding by faith upon Christ, a process which is rendered operative by the receiving of the visible signs of His Body and Blood, as by every other means through which faith in Him is aroused, quickened, and stimulated. Hence the sacramental language which is used of the Lord's Supper is not so liable to misinterpretation as that which is used of Baptism.

And yet even here the recognition of the principle of sacramental language is important, and particularly in the interpretation of Patristic teaching. It is only too possible, through the use of isolated quotations, to make the Fathers responsible for conceptions which are entirely alien to their teaching. They freely speak of the sign in terms which properly belong only to the thing signified; and though it was a natural form of speech, they

[1] 1 Cor. x. 16.

not infrequently explain their language. St. Augustine, for example, declares that the principle of speech which enables him to speak of an infant being made a believer by Baptism, also enables him to speak of the Lord's Supper as the continual offering of Christ's sacrifice.[1] Such language, he says, is possible and natural, because Baptism is the sign of faith, and the Lord's Supper is the sign and commemoration of the sacrifice once offered.[2]

[1] See above, p. 63.

[2] Compare : *He* [St. Chrysostom] *saith further, that we of the Gospel have a sacrifice also, and that daily, but in remembrance of that sacrifice once made upon the cross. And although we sacrifice in sundry places, yet, saith he, the sacrifice is but one, because it hath relation unto that one sacrifice of Christ. And therefore he addeth : 'How is it one oblation, and not many? Because it was once offered, it was offered into the holy place; but this sacrifice* (meaning the ministration of the sacrament) *is an example of that.' And what he meaneth by the word 'exemplar,' he sheweth a few lines before : 'The things that bear only a likeness shew the samplar of some other thing, but not the power of the same : as an image sheweth the pattern of a man, but not the power of a man.' Hereof St. Chrysostom concludeth thus : 'The thing that we do is done in remembrance of that thing that was done before. For Christ said, Do this in My remembrance.' Hereby it appeareth in what sense the old fathers used these words 'oblation' and 'sacrifice.'*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 171. P.S.E.

Compare also : *What then? Do we not offer day by day? We do offer, but as making a remembrance* (ἀνάμνησιν ποιούμενοι, *revocamus in memoriam*) *of His death. . . . We do not offer another sacrifice, as the High Priest did formerly, but always the same : or rather, we make a remembrance of a sacrifice.*—St. Chrysostom, *In Ep. ad Heb., Hom.*, xvii. *Opera*, xii. 241. Ed. Montf., Par., 1838. See also Bp. Chr. Wordsworth's comments on Mal. i. 11 ; Heb. x. 12.

It must be noted too that the sacrifice of Christ is also freely spoken of, apart from the Eucharistic action, as being perpetuated through the meditation and faith of the believer. See below, pp. 96 f.

Now the important point to notice in this connection is that while a sign can be spoken of as though it were the thing signified, the process cannot be reversed: the thing signified cannot be spoken of as though it were the sign. When therefore the Fathers speak of the sacred elements in the Supper now as signs, now as the Body and the Blood, and when they speak of the whole ordinance now as a commemoration, now as the sacrifice itself, it is manifest that the meaning of their language is governed, limited, and determined by their description of the Sacrament as sign and commemoration. As Bishop Christopher Wordsworth pointed out, a map of Greece can be spoken of as if it were the country of Greece, but the country of Greece cannot be called a map of Greece. The manner of speech according to which the sign and commemoration of the sacrifice once offered could be spoken of as the very offering of the sacrifice was quite natural; but its use in Patristic writings has been turned to purposes which the Fathers never contemplated. If they could have foreseen the developments of doctrine which have claimed their language for support, they would doubtless have curtailed the freedom with which they used it.[1]

[1] See Bp. Chr. Wordsworth's Notes on Mal. i. 11; Heb. x. 12, *Commentary onthe Bible*; and compare Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 128 f., 167 ff., 171, 463, 521; iii. 337.

CHAPTER VIII

THE REAL PRESENCE

THE Sacramental Principle, as explained and applied in the foregoing chapters, is the use of physical and material things for the purposes of mind and spirit; those purposes being the apprehension or experience, initiated or developed, of realities represented, exhibited, interpreted, signified by the physical element.

Now it is important that we should be ready to distinguish between the objectivity of the mental or spiritual reality which has to be apprehended, and the experience which is involved in its apprehension and enjoyment; and this distinction is particularly necessary when we formulate our conceptions of the Eucharistic Presence of the Lord Jesus. We are beset by tendencies to regard the Presence of the Lord in the Holy Communion as dependent, on the one hand, upon the faith of the recipient of the sacred elements, and, on the other hand, upon the word and action of the celebrant. But these conditions determine, not the objective reality, but the apprehension and experience of it. The real and objective Presence of the Lord is independent alike of faith and of

the consecration of the sacred elements : it is only as a reality of spiritual experience that faith [1] can determine the Presence, and it is only as an assistance to the exercise of faith that the consecration and reception of the sacred elements can have any part in the process.[2]

It has been said that this conception does not adequately explain the experience of the communicant, who apprehends a Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, different in kind and degree from that enjoyed at other times and in other ways. But this position appears to involve the confusion of thought to which we have referred. For, in the first place, the objective Presence of the Lord cannot admit of differences of kind or degree. He is one and the same Person under all circumstances and at all times ; He is not more or less than Himself at any time or under any circumstance. The difference referred to is a difference, not of the Presence, but of the experience, apprehension, enjoyment of it. That this difference is not only a possibility, but also for very many a fact, every one ought to be ready to admit.

In the second place, it must be remembered that experience varies with different people ; and that there are very many who get their experience of the Presence of the Lord not only at the Holy

[1] ' Faith ' is used here of the believer's attitude of mind and heart towards the unseen Lord. Rom. x. 9 f. ; Gal. ii. 20.

[2] Comp. Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 448 f., 519, 528, P.S.E. *Christ is present . . . by the Sacraments only as by means of outward instruments to move our senses.*—*Ibid.* iii. 488.

Communion, but also, and just as really and as fully, through their meditation on Him at the times of Bible reading and prayer. It is this fact which lies behind the statements which occur frequently in Patristic writings, and are re-echoed by our English Reformers, that Christ is really present in His Word, and in Baptism, as well as in the Lord's Supper, which is only one among the several means whereby His Presence is experienced and enjoyed.[1]

But if our Lord's Presence at the Holy Communion is not unique in kind or degree, regarded from the point of view of its objective reality, it is certainly unique in purpose. He is present in the midst of His people at the Eucharist, for a purpose which is not entirely the same at any other time or under any other circumstance. This unique purpose is that He should be the Host and the Food at the Feast of His own appointment; and in this Feast the unique element is not the food which our spirits receive, for that has been continually received by us ever since we

[1] Compare: *By the record of the old fathers Christ is present among us sundry ways: by His Holy Spirit . . . by His grace . . . by His divinity and majesty . . . by faith dwelling in our hearts. . . . Thus is Christ most comfortably present in His Holy Word, in the mystery of Baptism, and in the Sacrament of His body. . . . We grant that Christ, being in heaven in His humanity and in the substance of His body, is nevertheless by His Spirit and grace invisibly present in His Sacraments.*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 486. P.S.E.

The conception is also expressed by the statement that the Word (*sermo scripturarum*) is the Body and Blood of Christ. Cf. *Ibid.* 519. See also i. 450, 472, 477, 491, 505; iii. 467.

came into possession of spiritual life,[1] but the circumstance of its donation and reception. The word 'circumstance' is used here advisedly to distinguish the particular mode of institutional exhibiting, presenting, and receiving, which is the unique feature of the ordinance, from the giving and receiving through the Spirit, the Word, and faith, which are essential to the experience at all times and under all circumstances, including the time and circumstance of the sacred ordinance.[2]

Christ, then, is present at the Holy Communion, really and objectively present, not in unique degree or manner (for differences of degree and manner have no place in the objective reality of His Spiritual Presence), but for unique purpose and under unique circumstance. He is objectively present, moreover, in such wise that there is no moment in the Service when a real absence can be converted into a real presence. Such change belongs to human apprehension or experience, not to the objective reality.

This position involves the belief that the purpose of the consecration of the sacred elements is something other than the change of the substance of the elements into Christ, or the conjunction of His Presence in a unique and exclusive manner with the elements. And here we have to face one of the cleavages of thought that have divided Christendom in the past, and lie at the root of the

[1] Compare St. John vi. 53 ff.
[2] St. John vi. 40, 47; xvii. 3.

differences which exist to-day in the Anglican Communion between the Evangelical and the Sacerdotal Schools of thought. From this point of view, the distinction between the doctrines of Transubstantiation and Consubstantiation are comparatively unimportant, when compared with the divergence that exists between the category of thought to which both the doctrines belong, and that represented by the Fathers of the English Reformation.[1]

Now in discussing the question we may find ourselves called upon at the outset to meet the objection that the consecration of the elements is evacuated of efficacy, if the purpose does not include some change in their nature. The answer is obvious: consecration is the setting aside of persons or things for holy uses. The fabric of the Church, the Holy Table, and the other articles of furniture are changed only in respect of their significance and use by consecration, and not in respect of

[1] Compare the following words from Archbishop Cranmer's Preface to his treatise on the Lord's Supper:

The rest is but branches and leaves, the cutting away whereof is but like topping and lopping of a tree, or cutting down of weeds, leaving the body standing and the roots in the ground; but the very body of the tree, or, rather, the roots of the weeds, is the Popish doctrine of transubstantiation, of the real presence of Christ's Flesh and Blood in the sacrament of the altar (as they call it), and of the sacrifice and oblation of Christ made by the priest for the salvation of the quick and the dead. Which roots, if they be suffered to grow in the Lord's vineyard, they will overspread all the ground again with the old errors and superstitions. These injuries to Christ be so intolerable that no Christian heart can willingly bear them. —Quoted from Dimock, *History of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 117. Ed. 1910, Longmans.

their nature and content; but this fact does not evacuate the consecration of meaning and efficacy.

The consecration of persons may be accompanied or followed by an experienced spiritual endowment, but the experience is not of the *esse* of the consecration. In the Holy Communion the consecration of the elements is the setting apart of them for the holy purposes of the Service, and essentially affects only their use.[1] If a change of nature and content is also involved, it is not because such a change is necessary to the efficacy of the consecration, but because in the Divine economy a supernatural operation is ordained to accompany it. But before we accept this as our belief, we must have evidence to support it.

It seems fair to assert that the idea of such a supernatural change would never have been entertained but for the words of institution, which are boldly claimed as requiring it. Refusal to believe in the change is freely criticised as due either to abandonment of the literal and plain meaning of the words, or to failure to recognise the supernatural.[2]

[1] Compare: *Howbeit, by whatsoever words consecration is made, it standeth not in the abolishing of natures, as M. Harding teacheth; nor in precise and close pronouncing of certain appointed words; but in the converting of the natural elements into a godly use; as we see in the water of Baptism.*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 123. P.S.E. See also i. 150 f., 447, 456, 547; iii. 63.

[2] There is not a particle of evidence for believing in 'the supernatural in the Sacraments' in the sense of organic union of Spirit and material element. And in any other sense there is no less evidence for believing in the supernatural in the Word and in preaching. The 'Evangelical' has as much belief in and reverence for the supernatural as the 'Catholic,' but he

Let us, then, examine the words.

We notice, in the first place, that there is variety in the records. There are two quite different forms of the words for the consecration of the cup : *This is My blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many* (*for the remission of sins*),[1] and *This cup is the New Covenant in My blood which is shed for many* (*even that which is poured out for you*).[2]

This comparison suggests one or two questions. Is the form given by St. Matthew and St. Mark the earlier ? If so, how could it have given place to another form which provides the strongest argument that is possible against the idea of identification or supernatural change being based on the word *is* ?

Or do St. Luke and St. Paul record the earlier form ? In that case, the words *This is My blood* became an alternative for a form in which the word *is* had already established itself as not connoting identification. And further, seeing that both the forms have Apostolic sanction, either could be used for the consecration of the wine, and there could be an efficacious consecration of the cup without the use of the words *This is My blood*.

does not believe that a bit of stone chipped off a saint's tomb, and kept in the pocket, is a safeguard against disease. And experience has proved that belief in 'the supernatural in the Sacraments' (in any other sense than that in which we can speak of the supernatural in the Word) passes very easily into belief in the supernatural in the stone.

[1] St. Matt. xxvi. 28 ; St. Mark xiv. 24.

[2] St. Luke xxii. 20 ; 1 Cor. xi. 25.

A second point to notice is that the more literally the words are taken, the less possibility is there of basing upon them the idea of a change of nature or content in the sacred elements. For the bread is the body as distinguished and separate from the blood, and the wine is the blood as distinguished and separate from the body.[1] It is only by calling in the theory of Concomitance that this idea of change can be upheld. In other words, it has to be allowed that *the body* does not mean the body, but the whole Person, and *the blood* does not mean the blood, but the whole Person.[2]

The result is that an interpretation which sets out with the demand for literal and plain meaning ends with repudiating it, and ignores the distinctions which the plain and literal meaning of the words requires.

Further, the records of the words of institution, in spite of important variations which characterise them in other respects, present no divergence in this respect, namely, that the sacred elements

[1] Comp. Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 206 ff., 446. P.S.E.

[2] *Now, touching this new fantasy of 'concomitantia,' after they had once devised a new religion, it was necessary, for aid of the same, to devise also new words. Whereas Christ saith, 'This is my body,' they say, 'This is my body and my blood.' Whereas Christ saith, 'This is my blood,' they say, 'This is my blood and my body'; and in either part, they say, is whole Christ, God and man. If ye demand how they know it, they say, not by the word of God, but by this new imagination of 'Concomitantia.'*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 534. P.S.E.

For this doctrine, and its relation to the earlier augmentation theory, see Dimock, *The Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, pp. 9 ff., 55 ff. Ed. 1910, Longmans.

are related to the Body and Blood of the Lord in their natural state and under the condition of separation in death.[1] The bread is the Body, not which was in some former state given and broken, but as given and broken; and the wine is the Blood, not which was on an historic occasion shed and poured out, but as shed and poured out for the remission of sins.[2] This important factor in the interpretation was noted by Bishop Westcott in the following words: *One grave point I am utterly unable to understand—how 'the Body broken' and 'the Blood shed' can be identified with the Person of the Lord. I find no warrant in our Prayer Book or ancient authorities for such an identification. . . . The circumstances of the Institution are, we may say, spiritually reproduced. The Lord Himself offers His Body given and His Blood shed. But these gifts are not either separately (as the Council of Trent) or in combination Himself. It seems to me vital to guard against the thought of the Person of the Lord in or under the form of bread and wine. From this the greatest practical errors follow. . . . (The elements) represent His human nature as He lived and died for us under the conditions of earthly life.*[3]

The actual words of Institution are their own and sufficiently clear evidence; but, if confirmation is required, it can be found in St. Paul's summing up of the significance of the sacred ordinance:

[1] Compare, e.g., Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 521. P.S.E.

[2] Such is the force of the article and participle construction as distinguished from the relative clause.

[3] *Life and Letters*, vol. ii. p. 351.

As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye do proclaim the Lord's death till He come.[1]

It seems, then, that the liturgical summarising of the blessings of the Holy Feast as the receiving of *remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion,* is a correct focussing of thought, as is also the language of Article xxviii., which describes the Lord's Supper as *the sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death.* But such language would be strangely misleading, if the principal feature of the ordinance were the supernatural conjunction of the living and glorified Lord with the elements of bread and wine ; with the inevitable consequence of thought being focussed on the glorified life of Him who died for us, rather than on the atoning death of Him who lives, and attention being concentrated on the coming of the Comforter, rather than on the sacrifice of Calvary.

Let us remind ourselves that we have been thinking for the moment only of the particular significance of the sacred elements. We shall never forget that the living Lord is the Host and Food of the Feast, that we are to keep the Feast only till He come, that apart from His Resurrection and Life in glory Calvary could have no atoning efficacy for us, that we feed on *Him* in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving ; but while this is so, the significance of the sacred elements, considered by themselves, is such that they exhibit to us the fact of the sacrifice of Calvary, they incite us to the remembrance that Christ died for us, and direct

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 26.

our spiritual feeding upon the living Lord, present in our midst and in our hearts, as having offered the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.[1]

On this showing, the purpose of the Sacraments is not to add to the mysterious element in our religion, but to make things easier for us, by presenting to us in simple and concrete form the cardinal truths and facts, the apprehension of which by faith is the condition of our co-operation with the work of Divine grace.[2] The mysterious element, in the sense of that which surpasses our comprehension and transcends our powers of understanding, remains: the Sacraments cannot explain

[1] Compare: *In the Holy Communion there is none other sight laid before us, but only the cross and death of Christ, and that Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. 'And the very cogitation hereof,' saith St. Augustine, 'so moveth our hearts, as if we saw Christ hanging presently before us upon His Cross.'*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 539. P.S.E. See also i. 448; iii. 62, 493.

[2] Harding charged Calvin with making the Sacraments superfluous, because he taught this conception of their necessity. Bp. Jewel replied: *If this be so dangerous a doctrine as you tell us, why then are the ancient Catholic fathers suffered to hold and maintain the same? Dionysius, whom you so often call St. Paul's scholar, writeth thus: . . . 'We, as much as may be, by sensible images or sacraments are brought unto divine contemplations.' Likewise St. Augustine saith: . . . 'Visible sacraments are ordained for carnal men, that by the steps of sacraments we may be led from the things that we see with eye unto the things that we understand.' So saith St. Cyprian: . . . 'The weakness of our faith is taught by the understanding of the sacrament.' So St. Chrysostom: . . . 'If we were bodiless, God would give us these things bare and bodiless. But forasmuch as we have souls fastened unto our bodies, therefore God giveth us things spiritual under things visible.'*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, iii. 370 f. P.S.E. See also iii. 558.

it to us, they can only simplify our task by assisting the faith whereby alone we can apprehend and apply to ourselves the revealed truth. But, on the other hand, the Sacraments are not in themselves an addition to the mysterious element: the supernatural is to be found not in their nature and operation, but in the truths and operations of which they are the ordered signs, the visible counterparts, the covenant seals. The general experience of the Sacramental Principle comes to the help of reason for the acceptance of this position. For it is inconceivable that the free use by man of the principle was determined by a desire to add to the mysteries of life, rather than to make the invisible more intelligible and easy to apprehend.

In respect of the real Presence of our Lord, we have given our reasons for rejecting any idea of additional mystery in connection with the consecration of the sacred elements at the Lord's Supper. But this does not mean that there is nothing left in respect of which the intellect is baffled and faith alone can act. The Presence belongs to the supernatural order, it defies intellectual comprehension, it is apprehended by faith alone. In attempting, therefore, to formulate and express our conception of the Spiritual Presence of our Lord, we depend entirely upon revelation. What, then, is the revelation? When the Lord asserted that the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood were essential for eternal life, He repudiated the idea of any literal contact with His actual flesh and blood. The Ascension was

to be the corrective of any such conception: *the flesh profiteth nothing*.[1]

When the Lord told His disciples that He was going to leave them, and that His departure was expedient for their sake, He gave them no indication that He would be present with them in some similar manner, through the mediation of that which was visible and material; but He promised that the Holy Spirit would come to them, and that the coming of the Holy Spirit would be the equivalent of His return to them.[2] After the Resurrection the Lord allowed Himself to be handled for the purpose of verification;[3] but when Mary tried to pay to His body the homage of her faith and devotion, He said, *Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended unto My Father; but go unto My brethren and say to them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God*.[4]

It seems, therefore, that our Lord presented His Ascension, and the Coming of the Holy Spirit, as the two governing facts for a true conception of His permanent Spiritual Presence. In other words, His Spiritual Presence is not a presence of His Resurrection Body, but His Presence under

[1] St. John vi. 61 ff.

[2] St. John xiv. 16 ff., 25 ff.; xv. 26; xvi. 5 ff.

[3] St. Luke xxiv. 38 f.; St. John xx. 27 ff.

[4] St. John xx. 17. Comp.: *We ought not to seek thee upon the earth nor in the earth nor according to the flesh, if we wish to find thee; for now we know Christ no more after the flesh. Stephen sought thee not upon the earth, who saw thee standing on the right hand of God; but Mary, who sought thee on the earth, could not touch thee. Stephen touched thee because he sought thee in heaven.* —Ambrose, *Exp. Ev. sec. Luc.*, Lib. x. c. 160.

the terms and after the manner of the Holy Spirit.[1] And this is confirmed by the fact that He speaks of the Father's coming as one and the same experience as His own coming, and both in close connection with the coming of the Holy Spirit: *If a man love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.*[2]

And what does this mean but that the Saviour, whom we have come to know through His manifestation in flesh, is ever with us and in us as God,[3] with

[1] Compare: *That we be thus in Christ, and Christ in us requireth not any corporal or local being, as in things natural. We are in Christ sitting in heaven, and Christ sitting in heaven is here in us, not by a natural, but by a spiritual mean of being. St. Augustine saith: . . . 'After that Christ is risen from the dead, and ascended unto his Father, he is in us by his Spirit.' Which saying agreeth well with these words of St. Basil: . . . 'St., Paul saith, If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is not of him. He addeth further these words, If Christ be in you; which is as much as if he had said, If the Spirit of Christ be within you.' So likewise St. Augustine imagineth Christ to say unto Mary Maudlen, 'I will ascend up unto my Father; then touch thou me'; meaning thereby, that distance of place cannot hinder spiritual touching.*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, i. 477.

[2] St. John xiv. 23.

[3] Compare: *Although the majesty and Godhead of Christ be everywhere abundantly dispersed, yet we believe that his body, as St. Augustine saith, 'must needs be still in one place'; and that Christ hath given majesty unto his body, but yet hath not taken away from it the nature of a body; and that we must not so affirm Christ to be God, that we deny him to be man. . . . And that the same Christ, though he be absent from us concerning his manhood, yet is ever present with us concerning his Godhead.*—Bp. Jewel, *Works*, iii. 59.

St. Augustine saith: 'Christ is everywhere by his power, not in deed; by his Godhead, not by his flesh.' St. Cyril saith: . . . 'Christ will evermore be with his disciples by the power of his

a Presence which is freed from all the limitations of flesh and blood, and is determined as to its enjoyment and efficacy by nothing but our faith, and the means whereby faith is quickened, strengthened, and confirmed ?

How shall I take hold of Him seeing that he is absent ? How shall I stretch forth my hand to heaven, and hold Him sitting there ? Send forth faith, and thou hast taken him.[1]

Divinity, although not in his body.'—Ibid. 535. See also *Works*, i. 490, 505 f.

[1] St. Augustine, *In Ev. Joan. Tract.* i. 4.

CHAPTER IX

THE SACRIFICIAL ASPECT OF THE EUCHARIST

THE relation of the Supper of the Lord to His redemptive work for the forgiveness of men's sins is a subject which has proved to be one of the greatest causes of dissension within the pale of Christendom.

It is not proposed here to review the history of the controversy, or to discuss the doctrine which is involved in the Roman theory of priesthood, but rather to treat the subject as it is presented in modern Anglican thought.

All English churchmen are agreed on the point that there is no fresh immolation of our Lord in the Eucharist, no repetition or continuance of the Calvary experience, no propitiatory efficacy apart from that one supreme sacrifice; but there are two distinct schools of thought amongst them as to the significance of the Lord's perpetual 'intercession,' and the interpretation of His heavenly ministry. According to the one school, the Lord is to be thought of as perpetually re-presenting His offering to the Father: and the Eucharist is regarded as the counterpart of that heavenly ministry at the earthly altar.

In the view of the other school, it is not merely the sacrifice which was made once for all, but also the offering of it: and the Eucharist is a commemoration of the offering once offered, and a special occasion and means of pleading its efficacy, as also of enjoying its benefits.

Now while these two conceptions may be so explained as to be barely distinguishable from each other, and easily capable of reconciliation, they have nevertheless proved to be productive of markedly divergent thought, language, and action. Indeed it is not too much to say that they are either the product of, or have led to, different conceptions, not only of the Holy Communion, but also of the ministry, of worship, and ultimately of God Himself.

For it is one thing to believe that the moral government of God required an historic manifestation of the condemnation of sin through the earthly life and death of the Lord Jesus; but it is quite another thing to believe that God requires for man's forgiveness a continual process of propitiation through the ceaseless re-presenting to Him by our Lord of His sacrifice.

It is one thing to believe that in the earthly sphere man for his own sake must continually plead the merit of Christ's sacrifice; but it is another thing to believe that in the heavenly sphere Christ is perpetually pleading on behalf of man.

That this difference of conception must ultimately resolve itself into a difference in the conception

of God is strikingly asserted by our Lord Himself. While He was living under earthly conditions He prayed for others. Intercession occupied a large portion of the closing hours of His earthly life, and it was offered in the main for His own disciples (St. John xvii. 9, 20), though on the Cross He also prayed for His enemies. When, however, He was speaking in anticipation of His life in glory, He said that He would not then make request for His disciples. In other words, He definitely ruled the offering of such intercession out of His heavenly ministry. Why? Because, if He had promised that He would pray for them in the heavenly sphere, it would have left them with an unworthy and inadequate conception of the Heavenly Father. *I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you.*[1]

The question at once arises here as to the meaning of the passages in which the Lord Jesus is said to be continually 'interceding' for us. The first thing to notice is that neither the word used by St. Paul,[2] nor the English equivalent, 'to intercede,' necessarily means 'to offer petition.' It

[1] St. John xvi. 26 f. The bearing of this upon the question as to the invocation of the saints is important. Petition and intercession are essential elements of prayer in this earthly sphere; but, if in the heavenly sphere the petition even of the one Mediator between God and man is unnecessary, what need have we for the petitions in that sphere of the departed saints? And further, if the conception of the one Mediator praying for us would involve an unworthy idea of the Father's love, what are we to say of the conception that we can and ought to invoke the departed saints to intercede for us?

[2] ἐντυγχάνειν, Rom viii. 34. Comp. Heb. vii. 25.

has the much wider and more general significance of undertaking a person's affairs, looking after a person's interest, intervening in a person's favour.

When the prophet states that the LORD 'wondered that there was no intercessor' for Judah,[1] he does not mean that there was no one to pray for the people, but that there was no one to interpose in their behalf, to act as their saviour and deliverer.

Hence to read into the word 'intercession' the idea of offering petitions and prayers is unnecessary; and, in the light of the Lord's statement, unjustifiable. But if petition is ruled out, what are we to say to the idea of re-presenting the sacrifice? For in proportion as men deem the act of commemoration in the Lord's Supper to be of greater value and efficacy than the mere pleading of the merits of Christ, so must they also regard such an alleged heavenly ministry, of which the Eucharist is the earthly counterpart, to be of greater moment than the mere offering of request and petition. But, seeing that the Lord repudiates the idea of His doing the lesser thing, on the ground that it would involve an unworthy conception of the Father's love for us, it would be nothing short of presumption for us to assert that He is doing the greater thing. If the promise to offer petition for us would have misrepresented His Father's love, how could He have entertained the idea of a continuous re-presenting of His sacrifice?

The truth of this line of reasoning is amply confirmed by the explicit statements of the Epistle

[1] Isa. lix. 16.

to the Hebrews. For if there is one thing that is more clearly asserted than anything else in that Epistle, it is that the Lord's priestly work of offering for sin is a completed ministry in the past. The writer of that Epistle almost goes out of his way to assert this truth. He asserts it by explicit statement;[1] he emphasises it by identifying the work of 'offering' with the historic death, and distinguishing it from the perpetual intercession;[2] he confirms it by his doctrine of the Heavenly Session, which he explains as signifying, not merely majesty and sovereignty, but also completed offering;[3] and he brings it to its climax by asserting that there is nothing left for that part of the Lord's work to accomplish, for *where remission of these is there is no more offering for sin.*[4]

[1] vii. 27, ix. 25, x. 10 ff. [2] vii. 25 ff., ix. 24 ff.
[3] i. 3, x. 11 f.
[4] x. 18, comp. ix. 12, x. 14; 'no more' (οὔκετι) expresses not class, but time relation. It is the repudiation, not merely of any other kind of offering or way of forgiveness, but also, and more particularly, of any continuance in time of the ministry whereby forgiveness is provided. The only passage in the Epistle which could possibly lend itself to the idea of continual offering is Heb. viii. 3, *it is necessary that this high priest have somewhat also to offer.* But the English translation does not and cannot exactly express the original. For in the Greek there is no equivalent of *it is*, and it would be equally possible and legitimate to use the rendering, *it was necessary*. Again, the word for *to offer* is προσενέγκῃ, which can only mean *do an act of offering*. When the writer wishes to speak of continual offering, he uses the tense which expresses it, προσφέρῃ (ix. 25). Finally, the context of the statement is one in which the writer emphatically denies continual offering (vii. 27, ix. 25 ff., x. 11 ff.), on the ground that the completed act accomplished all that such offering was intended to accomplish (ix. 12, x. 10, 12, 14,

To this interpretation, however, there is a reply which is urged with confidence, and must be examined. It is that we must take a more philosophic view of the whole conception. The language on which stress has just been laid is, we are told, only, after all, an attempt to express in terms of time what is in reality eternal fact; and we must try to look at the matter from the point of view of eternity. Christ is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world: He is eternal; and seeing that He is both the Victim and the Priest, He is the eternal Victim and the eternal Priest. Hence the language which speaks of his continual re-presentation of His offering is the more true philosophically. His eternal life with the Father is the eternal presentation of Himself to the Father as the eternal offering for the sins of men.

Now if this means that the offering of Christ is eternal in the sense in which the Calvary experience may be regarded as eternal, well and good. We have no objection to offer. But this is not the way in which the view is presented to us: we are bidden to think of the Calvary experience as a thing of the past, and at the same time to view the offering as a fact in eternity. But this is a confusion of time and eternity: we must view the process of redemption either wholly in the light of eternity or wholly in that of time. We

18). For critical treatment of the passage reference may be made to Westcott, *in loc.*; Dimock, *Our One High Priest on High* (ed. Longmans); and the writer's *The Heavenly Session of Our Lord.*

may not apply terms of time to one part, and the language of eternity to another. Or if, in order to escape the confusion of time and eternity, we argue that because the Lord is eternal therefore His manifestation on earth in flesh and blood is eternal too, we may be indulging in good philosophy, but we are fogging the mind of the ordinary man. And yet such a position is just as valid as the argument that because the Lord is eternal, therefore His victim state is eternal too, a conception which is equally useless to the man in the street. For him the fact that the Eternal Lord was the victim on Calvary's Cross, no more renders the Cross an eternal experience, than the fact that the Eternal Lord offered Himself once for all renders the offering an eternal process. From man's point of view the only eternal element of the death of Christ is its efficacy.

We are creatures of time, revelation is given to us in the terms of time ; we are allowed to think and speak of it in the terms of time. And in the terms of time, which are those of the Epistle to the Hebrews, both the death of Christ and His offering of Himself for our sins are historic facts of the past. The part of the Lord's priestly ministry which continues, according to the sacred writer, is the ' intercession.' And it is the interpretation of this that we have to discover.

We have already noted the fact that the word used does not necessarily involve the offering of petition, still less the offering of sacrifice : we have also recalled the words of the Lord in which He

repudiates the idea that He would in the heavenly sphere offer prayer to His Father for His disciples. What, then, remains for the 'Intercession'?

The answer is given to us by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews: *Christ is entered into heaven itself now to appear before the face of God for us.*[1] The Presence of Christ with the Father as our representative, in our nature, the Head of the Church which is His Body, that is the 'intercession.' For in Him we too as members of His Body are seated in the heavenly places; through Him we have immediate access with boldness and confidence to the Throne of grace. It is as King that Christ is also Priest: it is as seated on the Throne that He also intercedes. His Priesthood is after the Order of Melchizedek. The Aaronic type foreshadowed His propitiatory work, and governs the conception of His Priesthood up to and including His entrance into the Holy Place not made with hands, but beyond that it fails. Melchizedek stands on the page of the Old Testament as one who was a King-Priest, and of whose priesthood there is no recorded end. Hence the Order of Melchizedek was a type of a Royal Priesthood which has neither succession nor ending. This is the type which governs the conception of the Lord's heavenly 'intercession.' It is the ministry of the King on His Throne, not of a suppliant at an altar; and it is the ministry of the eternal King who ever lives to save right on to the end all those who come unto God through

[1] ix. 24.

Him.[1] In the words of Bishop Westcott: 'The modern conception of Christ pleading in heaven His Passion, "offering His Blood" on behalf of men, has no foundation in the Epistle (i.e. *Hebrews*). His glorified humanity is the eternal pledge of the absolute efficacy of His accomplished work. He pleads, as older writers truly expressed the thought, by His Presence on the Father's Throne.'[2]

There is then in the heavenly sphere no continual offering of Christ to which the Eucharist can be related. It has, however, other associations which give it a sacrificial character.

The first and most obvious of these arises from the fact that the Sacrament was instituted to commemorate the once-offered sacrifice. For in the sense in which we may be said to offer Christ whenever we plead the merits of His sacrifice, in that sense the pleading at the time of the commemorative ordinance is an offering of Christ. And in this sense sacrificial language has been freely used of the Eucharist since the second century. But let it be noted that in the early use of the language the altar was the mind of the worshipper, before it came to connote exclusively the Holy Table.[3]

[1] For a fuller and historical treatment of this subject, reference may be made to the writer's *The Heavenly Session of our Lord*, pp. 149 ff.

[2] *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 229.

[3] Compare: *When we do not forget the gift of the Saviour, is not Christ every day sacrificed unto us? (nobis immolatur). And once Christ was sacrificed unto us when we entered into faith: then there was the process of thinking, but now there are the impressions left by thought; when we remember why He came to us, and what He gave to us, by the very impressions left by thought,*

In the second place, the sacrificial aspect consists in the offering of praise and thanksgiving for the sacrifice commemorated and for the benefits which we receive through it. The Supper of the Lord is the Church's Eucharist.

In the third place, the Lord's Supper is the occasion for the offering of alms and oblations, sacrifices with which 'God is well pleased.'[1]

Finally, the Lord's Supper is the occasion at which we gather up into an outward and visible

that is to say, by the exercise of memory, He is day by day sacrificed unto us.—St. Augustine, *In Ps.* lxxv. 15, *Opera*, tom. iv., col. 1144. Ed. Par. 1835.

It should be noticed here that the sacrificial language is used of the exercise of thought and memory without any reference to the Lord's Supper.

Elsewhere St. Augustine uses similar sacrificial language in connection with Holy Baptism: *At that time doth every man offer up the sacrifice of Christ's Passion for his sins, when he is dedicated by the faith in His Passion, and by Baptism is endued with the name of faithful Christians.—Ep. ad Rom. Expos.*, 19, *Opera*, iii. 2, 2651, Ed. Par. 1837.

So too with reference to the Holy Communion: *Was not Christ once offered in Himself? Yet, that notwithstanding, by way of a sacrament He is offered every day unto the people, not at Easter only, but also every day; and he saith no untruth, that, being demanded the question, saith, 'Christ is offered.' For if the Sacraments had not a certain likeness of the things whereof they be sacraments, then should they indeed be no Sacraments. And of this likeness many times they bear the names of the things themselves: as the Sacrament of Christ's body, by a certain manner of speech, is the body of Christ.—Ep. ad Bonif.*, xcviii. 9.

The conception of Christ being daily offered on the altar of the mind, can also be illustrated by the following words of St. Ambrose: *I may boldly call your minds altars: for that in them Christ is daily offered for the redemption of the body.—De Virg.*, Lib. ii. 2, 18.

[1] Heb. xiii. 16.

act the offering of ourselves, our souls, and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto God. In union with His once-offered sacrifice, and covered by His merits, we make this supreme sacrifice, as we identify ourselves with Him, outwardly through the participation in the symbols of His Body broken and Blood shed, inwardly through the surrender of our wills to the Father.

It is in this connection that we can perceive most clearly the significance of the change introduced by the placing of the prayer of oblation after Communion. It is a true and inspiring order which we must not sacrifice to a sentimental craving for mediæval arrangements, still less to a demand for the restoration of mediæval error. It is only as we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus, that is to say, as we make ourselves one with the character and purpose of His earthly life, that we can make this supreme sacrifice to the Father. And therefore the act of oblation comes much more fittingly after Communion, as it is placed in our Prayer Book.[1] To return to the

[1] It is here that is to be found the true inwardness of the unwillingness to make the Holy Communion 'the Central Service' of the Sunday worship. If the 'Central Service' means the Service held at the hour at which the most people can come together, and the Service in which they are all intended to join as the central act of their worship, it follows at once that the central act of the Service is conceived to be the consecration of the elements considered as an end in itself; for we are confronted with the fact that a considerable proportion of worshippers are not communicants, and we encourage those who are communicants to communicate at early celebrations. Moreover, at many churches where this conception of 'the Central Service' prevails, it is made quite evident that acts of communion at that Service are neither expected nor desired. But

1549 order, according to which the thought of oblation is focussed on the consecration of the sacred elements, would involve the abandonment

this is not the Lord's own Service according to His institution, for by His institution the centre and heart of the Service is summed up in the words, *Take eat, this is My body. Drink ye all of this, for this is My blood.* Consequently, where the communion of the worshippers is not the central feature, the Service is shorn of its central observance, and we are left with a Central Service which is different in purpose from that which the Lord instituted. If circumstances were ideal, and all members of a congregation were communicants, nothing could be more fitting than the participation in the Lord's Supper as the central occasion of the congregational worship.

But as things normally are in our congregations, this ideal cannot be realised ; and it appears to the present writer to be more important to preserve the Lord's own institution, than to sacrifice its principal feature for the purpose of accommodating it to a non-communicant congregation. It may be quite justifiable and expedient to allow non-communicants on occasions to witness the celebration ; but this is an entirely different matter from that use of the Service which is exemplified in the Mass of the Roman Church. And with the history of mediæval practice behind us, the use of the Roman Church around us, and the development of Roman ideals amongst us, it is not to be wondered at that ' the Central Service ' proposal is viewed with suspicion.

It may, however, prove to be capable of some measure of realisation, without sacrificing the Lord's own institution : and the implications of such development are worthy of consideration. It will mean the elimination of an artificial period of fasting before Communion ; it will also mean for many parishes evening celebrations, where the Lord's rule of mercy and not sacrifice is permitted to guide the provision of the Service for people whose early Sunday mornings are their only opportunity of a little additional rest, and the bulk of the morning has to be devoted to house work; finally, it will mean that the congregation is encouraged to communicate at the time of the Central Service, so that we may recover what the multiplicity of celebrations have done so much to obliterate, viz. the Feast of Fellowship.

of one of the most instructive features of our present Service. For in true consistency with the original institution, the English order unites Consecration and Communion as together making up the central act of the Service, and as together constituting the outward counterpart of the spiritual sacrifice.

What the Church of England needs to-day is not to part with this feature of her Service, but to apprehend its significance and to apply its teaching to daily life. Prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ means prayer offered by those who share His character as well as plead His merits; and the attractive power of the Cross of Christ depends on the witness of men and women who not only proclaim the fact by word and ceremony, but also manifest the self-sacrifice in life and conduct. It is as we identify ourselves with the character of the Lord Jesus that we can offer to the Heavenly Father the sacrifice which He requires, and exhibit to the world the Gospel which it needs.

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Printed by Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd., Colchester, London and Eton, England.

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